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SAXON AND MEDIEVAL FEATURES AT LITTLE LINTON FARM, 1992



Cambridgeshire
County Council



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SAXON & MEDIEVAL FEATURES AT LITTLE LINTON FARM

Simon Bray

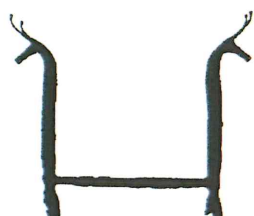
1992

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Report no. 75

Cleaning the Surface of Two Early Medieval Gullies



cambridgeshire
archaeology

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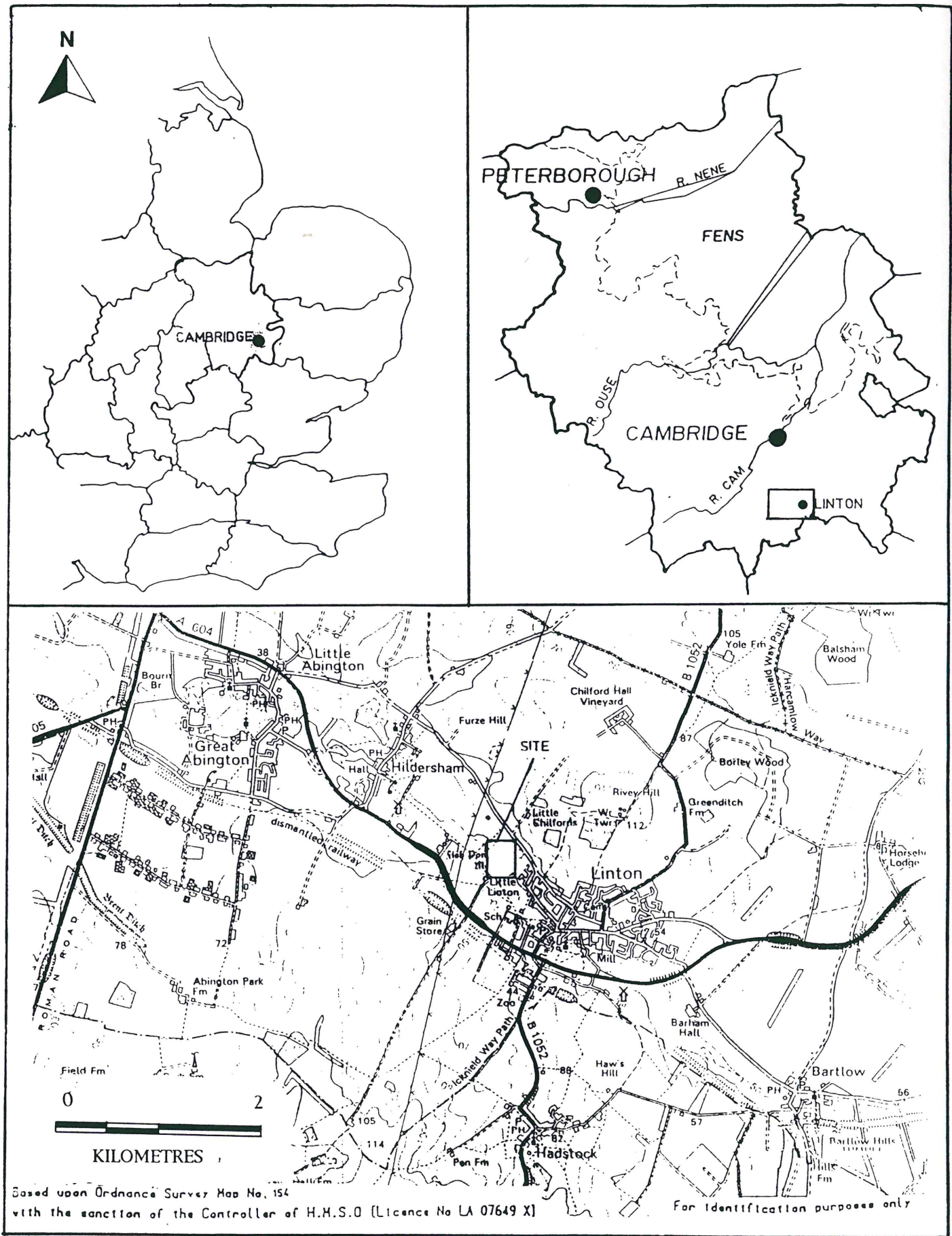


FIGURE 1 - SITE LOCATION PLAN

ABSTRACT

During May and June 1992 a phased evaluation was completed by Cambridgeshire Archaeology at Little Linton farm (fig 1).

Phase I revealed no ancient features. In Phase II of the recording works, 11 archaeological features were recorded. Two substantial Early-Saxon () opposed deep ditch terminals, two shallow early-medieval east/west gullies, six postholes and a horse burial of uncertain date.*

The archive is deposited with the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Section. The finds will be located with the Landowner, Mr. Taylor, Snr, at Little Linton farmhouse.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 A phased programme of archaeological recording was undertaken by *Cambridgeshire Archaeology*, in May and June 1992 at Little Linton farm. Phase I was completed in the farmyard as a condition of planning permission for the conversion of three barns, whose sites date to the 16th century (fig. 2 (Historic Buildings Records)), to domestic dwellings. Phase II was completed to the south of the farmhouse and to the north of the deserted medieval village of Little Linton (SMR 11010) prior to planning permission for the construction of two stable blocks. Both programmes of work were commissioned and funded by the developer, Mr. S. Taylor, Jr. The archaeological potential of the site was indicated by the presence of the barns, a 12th century moated manor and medieval garden remains (Brown and Taylor, 1991) to the north and to the south by earthworks representing the deserted medieval village of Little Linton (fig. 3), partially excavated in 1991 (Shotliff, 1992). Although immediately adjacent to these earthworks the area affected by Phase II only contained one possible earthwork, a north/south bank at the north-eastern extent of the site.

1.2.1 The aims of Phase I were to: -

- Identify the depth of modern disturbance
- Determine whether any early layers were present that would be disturbed by the construction of services and footings necessary for the proposed development.

- Advise the County Archaeology Office on further work or avoidance of areas if any archaeological sensitive deposits were present.

1.2.2 The aims of Phase II were to -

- Identify the depth of archaeological deposits.
- Advise the County Archaeology Office on further work or preservation if archaeological deposits were present.

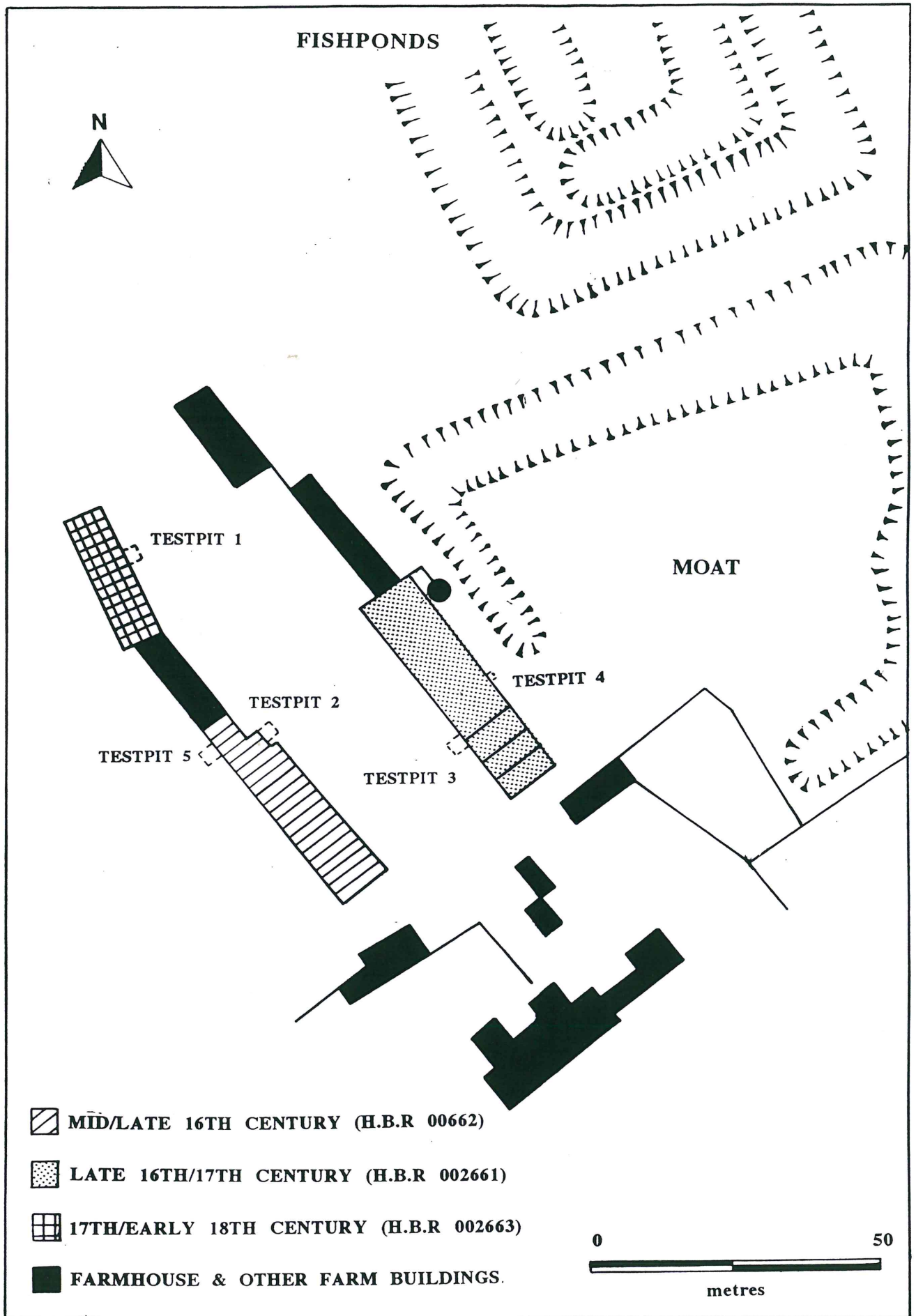


FIGURE 2 - PHASE I: TESTPIT LOCATION PLAN AND BARN PHASING

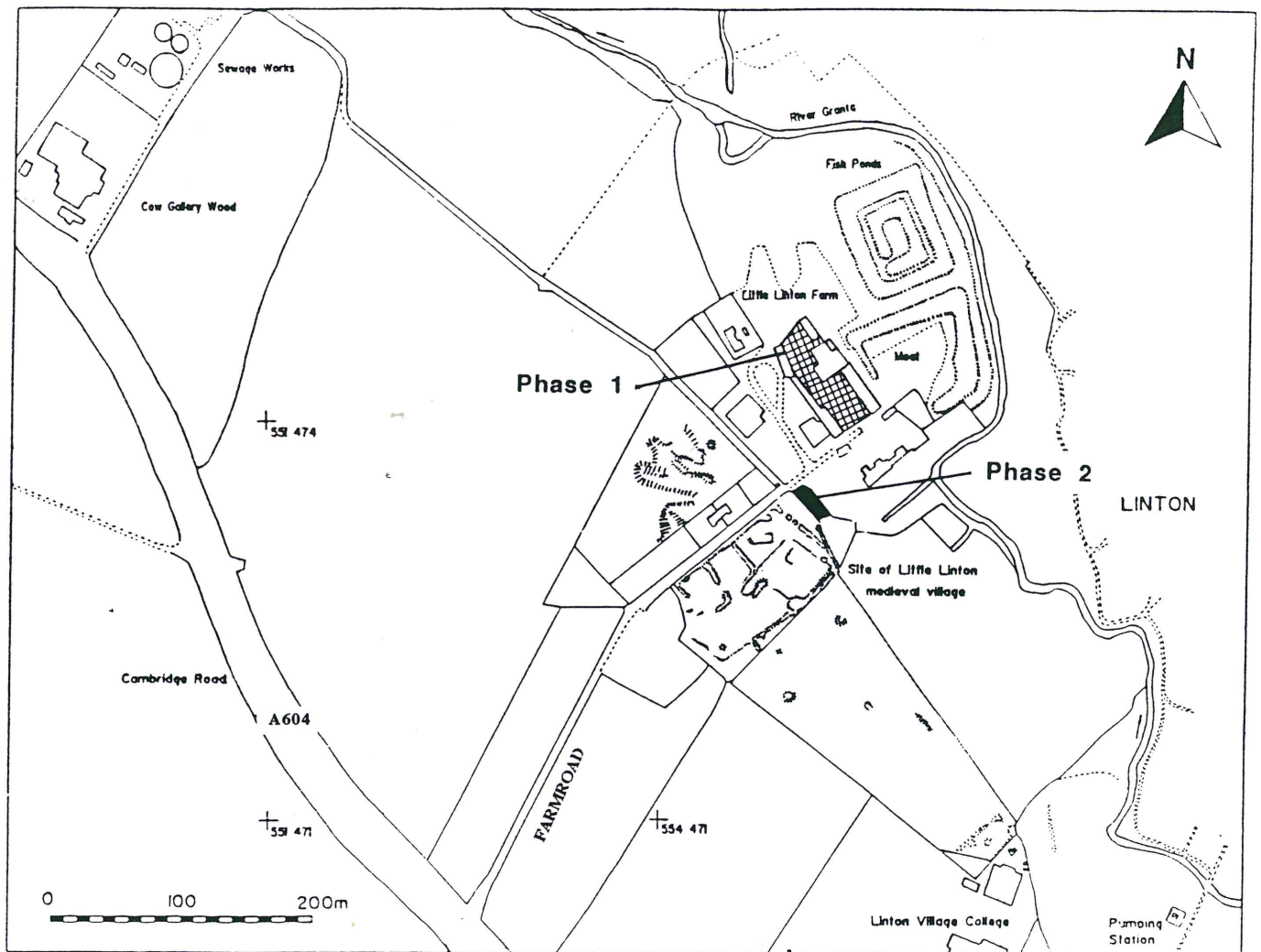


FIGURE 3. LOCATION OF PHASES 1 & 2 IN RELATION TO THE SITE OF THE DESERTED MEDIEVAL VILLAGE OF LITTLE LINTON.

2 BACKGROUND

The site is located on glacial gravels a quarter of a mile to the west of the village of Linton and 9 miles to the south-east of Cambridge. It is situated on low-lying, fertile flood plains immediately west of the River Granta.

The parish of Linton today represents the amalgamation of three distinct adjacent settlements: Great Linton, Little Linton and Barham. The villages of Great and Little Linton are first mentioned during a land exchange from King Ethelred to Ely Abbey in 1008 (Wright A.P.M, 1978) and again in 1086 when they both appear in the Domesday Book.

The site of Little Linton survives in two distinct areas to the north-east and south of the present farmhouse. A moated site to the north-east is that of Little Linton manor house (Parys estate map c.1600), in use by the Pary's family between the late 15th to early-17th centuries, which, as part of a large estate, encompassed both the manors of Great and Little Linton. The manorial complex includes a mill, fishponds and barns situated within an artificial meander in the River Granta (fig. 3).

No visible remains of the manor house survive. The earliest parts of the existing farmhouse appear to date to the mid-17th century with the possible abandonment of the manor house at this time. Two of the standing barns to the north-west of the farmhouse appear to stand on the site of barns dating to the mid to late-16th century (fig. 2), although they were largely re-built, renovated and altered in the 17th, 19th and 20th centuries (Historic Building Record).

Earthworks (fig. 3) to the south-west of the present farmhouse have been surveyed by C.C Taylor on behalf of the Royal Commission of Historic Monuments (England) — RCHME — and are thought to represent part of the deserted medieval village. Excavations in 1991 through these earthworks (performed in connection with the construction of a pipeline by Anglian Water) recorded a substantial cobbled trackway (Shotliff, 1992). Dating evidence from the latter would seem to confirm the existence of the village in the 13th - 14th centuries with the final abandonment in the 17th century.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Phase I Four two-metre square and one one-metre square testpits (fig. 2) were excavated by hand to ascertain the depth of modern disturbance and the state of preservation of any earlier layers. In positioning the testpits consideration was given to the needs of a working farm to minimise any inconvenience caused. Three testpits (I,II,III) were located within the farmyard adjacent to the barns proposed for conversion. Testpit IV was positioned on the north-eastern side of the site, opposite the moated manor site. The last testpit (V) was excavated against the barn on the south-western extent of the site.

3.2 Phase II Two trenches were opened by a mechanical excavator representing 47% of the total area of the site. Trench I, 8x2 metres, was opened parallel to the farmroad, 8x2, to a depth of 50 cm at which depth glacial gravels were encountered. To the east of Trench I a larger area, Trench II, was opened, measuring 16x6m. This trench provided an open view of the site and cut through a north/south ridge viewed before excavation. A Watching Brief was maintained whilst the topsoil was removed, but no archaeological features were noted cutting this layer. The natural glacial gravels were encountered at a depth of between 50 - 70 cm into which several features were noted. The trenches were then cleaned by hand and a 1:100 pre-excavation plan completed, followed by a planned sampling strategy of any features.

4 RESULTS

4.1 PHASE I

Within the area examined few archaeological features were present. The testpits varied in depth between 30 cm and 80 cm, the upper fills being made up of compacted hardcore and agricultural debris. The foundations of the barns were viewed in all testpits and two phases of construction were noted. They were built of timber over low, handmade-brick plinths laid directly onto the contemporary ground surface. With one exception the foundations had been strengthened by deeper, factory-made brick footings in front of the original footings. The exception was in Testpit I where the barn appeared to have been rebuilt, with the new foundations directly over the original footings over which a timber structure was constructed using the original timbers but with new weather-boards and roof.

4.1.1 Testpit I This testpit was located within the farmyard at the western end of the site against the latest barn, *Barn 3* (fig. 2). A layer of compacted hardcore and agricultural debris, 30 cm deep, was encountered, which overlaid a homogeneous layer of natural sand, 35 cm deep, over natural gravels.

4.1.2 Testpit II This testpit was located within the farmyard at the corner of the earliest barn, *Barn 1* (fig. 2). A pipetrench [7], c.1983, was found aligned south-east/north-west. A soak-a-way [9] for the barn was found cut by the pipetrench (fig. 4).

To the south-west the foundations of the barn were encountered, reinforced with modern bricks and capped by a 30 cm deep concrete collar which extended the length of the barn.

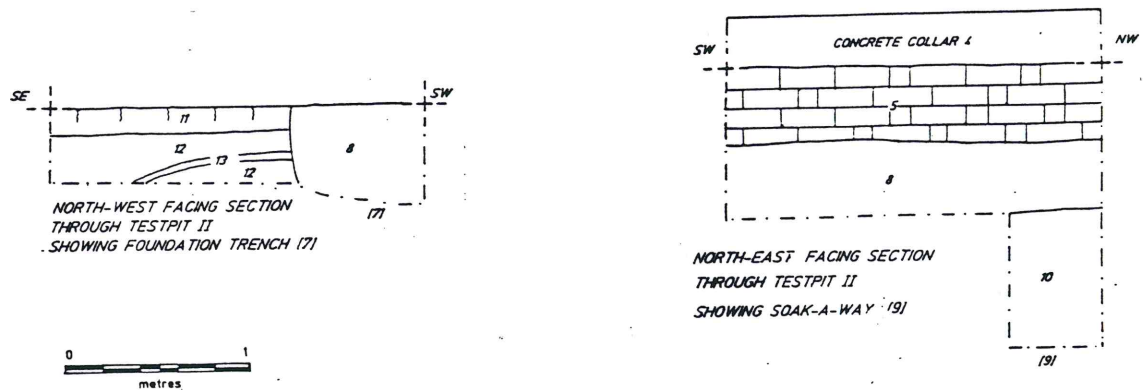


FIGURE 4 SECTION THROUGH TESTPIT II

4.1.3 Testpit III This located within the farmyard against *Barn 2* (fig. 2), at the junction between the original structure and an extension, situated partially beneath a disused loading door. A linear feature running parallel to the barn, extending 1.1 m into the testpit was found, upon excavation, to be the foundation trench for the repairs and construction for both barns. The remainder of the trench was made up of redeposited natural, 20 cm thick, below which a compact thick layer of asphalt was encountered, possibly the remnants of asphalt flooring laid in the barn in 1906. This layer was laid directly onto natural gravels. Here it was possible to distinguish between the barn's foundations; to the western edge of the testpit the foundations were reinforced with factory made bricks, 70 cm deep, laid in front of the original footings. The foundations of the extension were two large squared clunch blocks, level with the base of the neighbouring brick footings.

4.1.4 Testpit IV A testpit, 1x1 m, was opened on the north-western side of the site in a corridor of land between *Barn 2* to the north-west and the moated manor to the north-east (fig. 2). The trench was reduced in size due to time constraints. A dark-brown silty/loam was found directly below the turfline, from which a mixture of modern debris was recovered. Natural gravels were found directly below the topsoil at a depth of 30 cm. This layer possibly represents the deposition of waste generated by the recent partial clearance of the moat.

To the north-west the foundations of the barn were encountered. They had been reinforced with modern bricks capped by a 30 cm-deep concrete collar extending the length of the barn. All but the concrete had been covered by soil.

4.1.5 Testpit V This testpit was opened outside the farmyard against *Barn 1* (fig. 2). A thick, even, compact, silty chalk layer, 25 cm thick, [26] was encountered beneath the topsoil. A modern foundation trench [24], aligned parallel to the barn, was noted cutting through this layer (fig. 5).

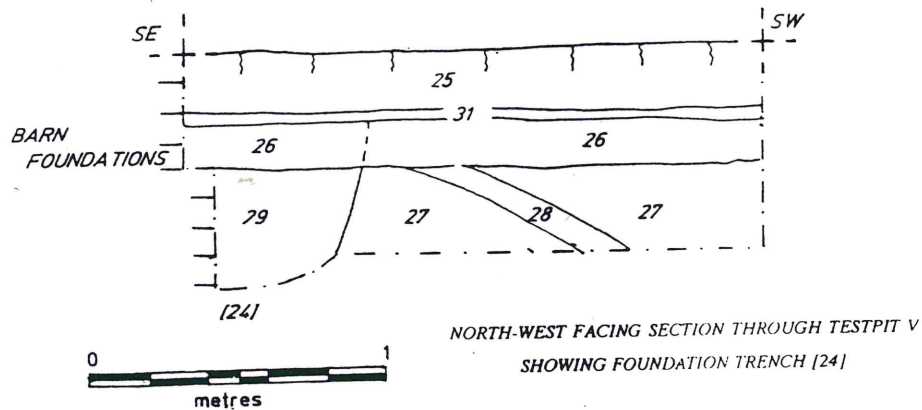


FIGURE 5 SECTION THROUGH TESTPIT V

4.2 PHASE II (fig. 6)

A single linear feature [42] was recorded, aligned north-west/south-east, crossing trench I and continuing into trench II as [12]. The archaeology in trench II was found to be sealed beneath 50 cm of worm-sorted topsoil. Of particular interest was a series of ditches ranging in date from the 5th century to 10th century AD (fig. 6, 7). The possible earthwork-bank seen prior to the excavation was found to be a ridge of undisturbed natural gravels.

4.2.1 Early-Saxon (*) An entranceway has been tentatively interpreted in the north-western corner of the trench. A straight-sided ditch terminal, [12], was recorded in the north-western corner of the trench (fig. 6), which upon excavation was found to be one metre deep, flat-bottomed and recut (fig. 8). Six layers were identified filling the latest phase of the ditch. All the layers were similar, being weathered, redeposited natural, possibly generated from the initial ditch construction. The feature has been provisionally dated by well stratified pottery to the Early-Saxon (*) period (Appendix A).

NORTH-EAST FACING SECTION THROUGH DITCH TERMINAL [12]

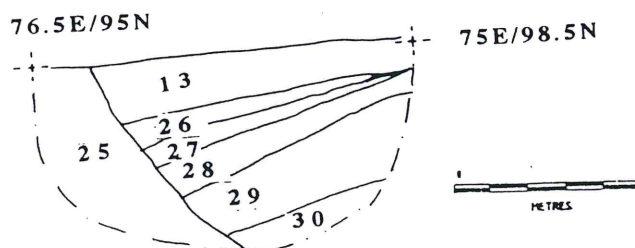


FIGURE 8 SECTION THROUGH 5TH CENTURY DITCH TERMINAL [12]

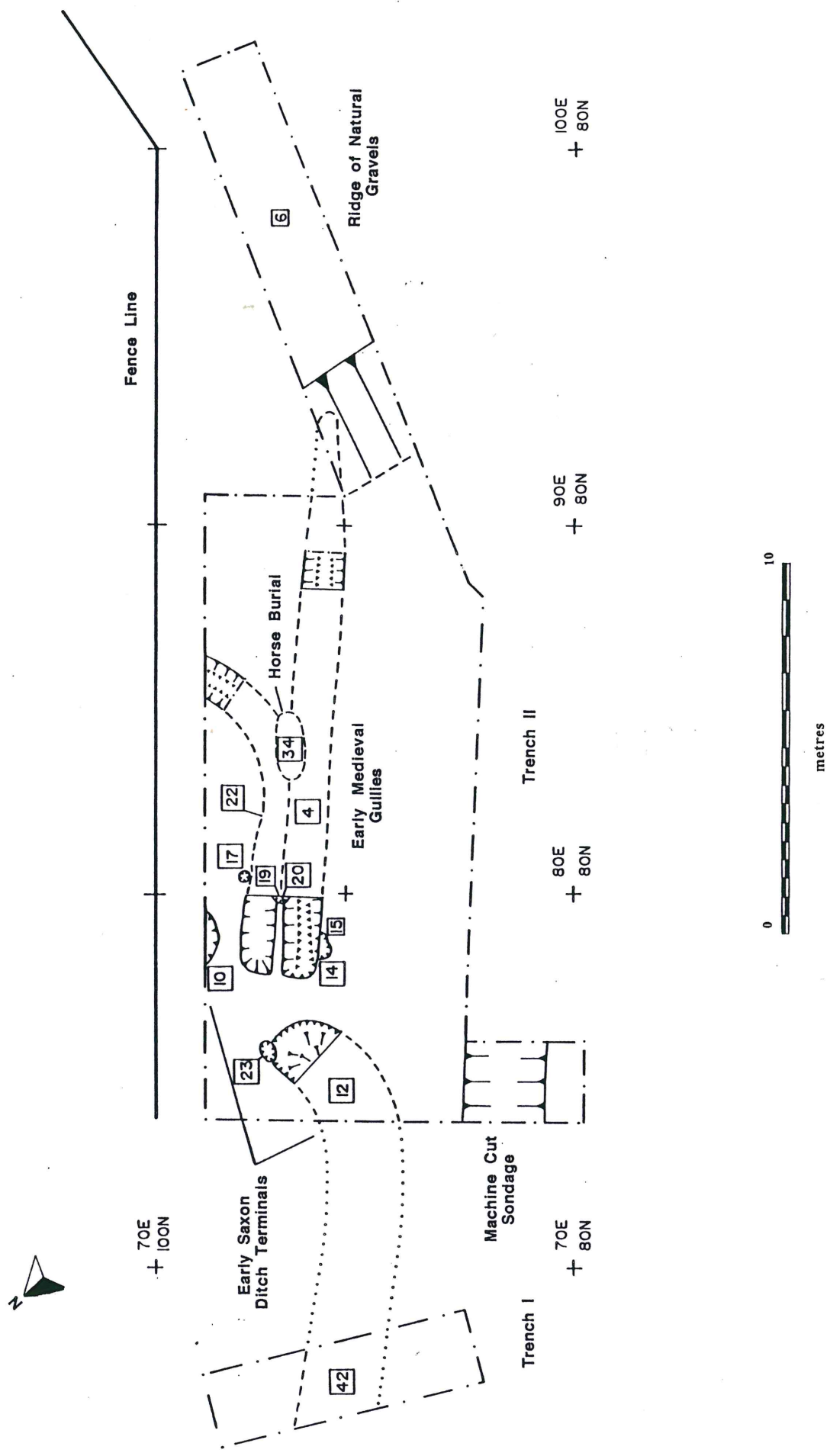
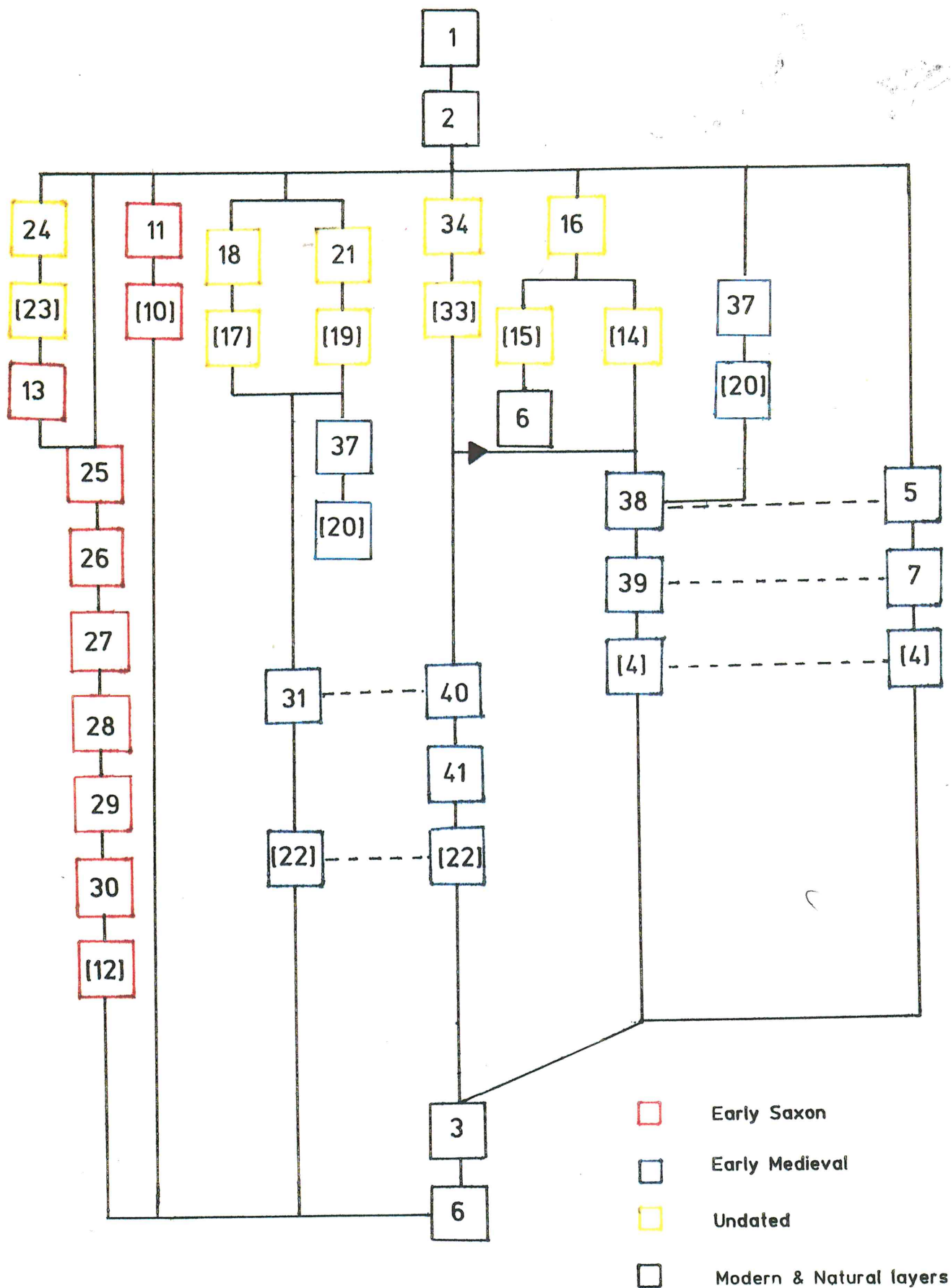


FIGURE 6 - PHASE II: PLAN OF EXCAVATED AREA



A second feature, [10], was found against the northern section, opposed to, an possibly the return of [12]. The feature only extended 50 cm into the trench, limiting the potential for excavation. Upon sampling [10] it was found to have a similar depth (fig. 6) and was of a contemporary date feature [12] (Appendix A). Although the feature has a markedly different fill (a dark brown homogenous silt) it is tentatively suggested that it could be a ditch terminal, forming an entranceway with [12], 3 m wide, for an enclosure extending beneath the present farmyard and garden. There was no evidence for any form of gateway or wheelruts between the features.

4.2.2 Early Medieval Aligned north-west/south-east in the centre of the trench, two contemporary Early medieval shallow gullies, [4,22], were recorded and sampled (fig. 6). The gullies possible represents palisade trenches, although further work would be needed to confirm this.

Gully [4], 1 m wide and 15.5 m in length, aligned north-west/south-east, ran down from a natural ridge to the south-east; it runs parallel to a contemporary gully [22]. Upon excavation it was found to be 50 cm deep, straight-sided and flat bottomed, filled by two distinct silt layers (fig. 9) from which Early medieval pottery was recovered (Appendix A).

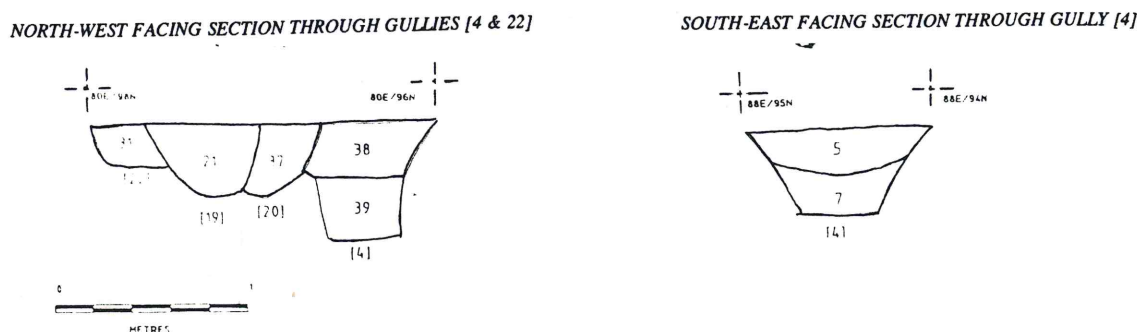


FIGURE 9 - SECTIONS THROUGH EARLY MEDIEVAL GULLIES [4 & 22]

A second shallow gully [22], running north-west/south-east, parallel to feature [4], was recorded and sampled. Terminating at the north-eastern end, level with [4], it was very shallow, 25 cm deep and flat bottomed. Running to the south-east for 6 m it turns north-east at 85E/97N through 100° at which point it was found to have similar fills and profile to feature [4] (fig. 9). Early medieval pottery was recovered from both the layers (Appendix A).

4.2.3 Undated Features In addition there were seven undated features cutting the earlier ditches and gullies (fig. 6, 7); all were sealed by the topsoil, which has remained undisturbed since the mid-19th century.

Five undated postholes were recorded cutting the gullies [4,22]. Upon excavation all were found to have similar dimensions and profiles, diam:30 cm and depth: 40 cm. A single sherd of Early medieval pottery was recovered from the fill of [20], although this is likely to be residual from [4]. A single, shallow, flat bottomed posthole was found cutting the end of ditch [12].

The articulated skeleton of horse was found buried in a pit [34] cutting the topsoil and both of the medieval gullies at 84E/93N (fig. 7).

5. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1.1 The assessment excavation has enhanced our knowledge of the history of Little Linton village. Phase I, by producing negative evidence, has indicated that the farmyard has changed little in plan and use since the mid 16th century when the barns were originally constructed.

5.1.2 Phase II was more productive - complementing the previous archaeological surveys and excavations it has demonstrated activity from the late Roman period up until the mid 16th century with the abandonment of the moated manor. The transition period, from the end of the Roman to Early-Saxon (*) generally remains enigmatic, with little documented and few recorded sites. Therefore any confirmed settlement sites are important in completing our knowledge of this period.

None of the features recorded in this assessment were viewed in the 1991 excavation.

5.2.1 **Phase I** No further work is advised prior to the planned barn conversions.

5.2.2 **Phase II** The well preserved archaeological deposits uncovered in Phase II require further consideration. Given the depth of archaeologically sensitive remains, at a depth of 50 - 70 cm, further work is not felt necessary as long as the proposed development does not disturb layers below 50 cm.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The financial commitment and interest provided by Mr. Taylor, Jnr. is gratefully acknowledged. Thanks must also go to Mr. Taylor, Snr. for providing invaluable local knowledge.

I would also like to thank Corrine Duhig, Tim Malim and Alison Taylor for their helpful comments on drafts of this report. Thanks also go to Crane Begg for his invaluable assistance in producing the illustrations in this report.

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APPENDIX A

THE POTTERY

by

Gavin Lucas

A small collection of mostly stratified pottery was studied and classified by fabric using a x10- magnification hand lens. The pottery ranges in date from early Romano-British through to medieval, including some interesting early Anglo-Saxon (*) sherds. Most of it is in fairly poor state, small and abraded, and there is not enough to refine the chronology. fabric types are given below followed by a summary of the pottery in each context.

FABRIC TYPES

Romano-British Fabrics

- 1 Hard, buff to grey fabric with frequent fine dark sand and frequent to moderate ill-sorted, sub-angular quartzite. Grey slipped, sometimes burnished.
- 2 Hard, fine sandy textured, red-brown to grey fabric with frequent coarse mica, occasional sub-angular quartzite and fine calcite. Grey slipped, sometimes burnished. Horningsea grey ware.
- 3 Hard, buff-orange fabric with moderate fine calcite and very occasional fine quartzite. Burnished surfaces.
- 4 Nene Valley colour coated ware - hard white fabric with dark or red colour-coat.
- 5 Hadham red ware - hard, fine sandy oxidised fabric with burnished surfaces.
- 6 Samian.

Early-Saxon Fabrics (*)

- 104
- | | | | | | |
|----|----|---|---|---|---|
| 10 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 3 |
| 6 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 1 | |
| 6 | 5 | 6 | | | |
| 1 | 40 | 1 | | | |
- 7
- | | |
|---|---|
| 3 | 1 |
| 1 | 2 |
- Soft to hard fine sandy fabric, dull colours (grey to brown and buff), frequent coarse mica, moderate ill-sorted quartzite and chalk, occasional to moderate larger angular inclusions of chalk up to 5 mm, and occasional grass-temper on surfaces. Sometimes burnished. Handmade vessels.
 - 8 Hard buff-brown fabric with abundant crushed shell, very occasional coarse mica - no other visible temper.

Earlier Medieval Fabrics

- 9 Hard buff-brown to grey fabric with abundant ill-sorted whitish quartzite. Similar to Thetford fabric, but consistently more oxidised surface. Local wheelmade unglazed ware.
- 10 Thetford grey ware - hard sandy grey fabric with frequent fine sub-angular quartz grains.
- 11 St. Neots ware - soft-hard shell-tempered red/brown/buff fabric with frequent fine dark particles.

- 12** Very hard orange-red fabric, moderate very fine dark sand, frequent mica, very occasional large angular white flint. Broad white painted stripes under translucent lead glaze. Local fine wheelmade glazed ware; similar type from Cambridge.
- 13** Fine orange sandy fabric, moderate mica, moderate fine quartzite. Mottled/patchy dark to pale green glaze. Midlands fine wheelmade glazed ware, possibly developed Stamford or Lincoln Ware.

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Contexts

- 02** 10 large and fairly unabraded sherds in fabric 7; at least three vessels represented (nos. 13,14 &15), all burnished. c.6th century AD. (Early Anglo-Saxon (*)).
- 03** • 6 small abraded sherds in fabric 1. This context also includes many fragments of soft white daub, and also a larger quantity of wall plaster fragments. The face is smooth and white, with 2-2.5 cm thick plaster with wattle impressions on the back. The composition of this consists in a fine sandy texture with abundant ill-sorted quartzite and occasional larger inclusions of flint, chalk and gravel.
- 004** Late Roman sherds (4th/5th century), all small and very abraded: 4 Nene Valley colour-coat, including plain-rimmed dish; 7 Hadham redware, including necked bowl; and 10 grey ware sherds (fabric 1 & 2).
Early-Saxon (*) sherds (5th/6th century), all small and abraded: 6 of fabric 7, including shreds with linear and arc combing; 3 of fabric 8.
4 miscellaneous crumbs.
- 005** Roman sherds: 17 grey ware (fabrics 1 & 2), 1 small sherd from a poppyhead beaker (1st/2nd century AD.), 2 Hadham redware sherds.
Early-Saxon (*) sherds 5 of fabrics 7, including one with wavy line over horizontal combing; 7 of fabric 8, including lug-handle of a jar - ?5th century AD. (no.16). Most of the sherds are small and very abraded.
- 007** Roman sherds: 37 grey ware (fabrics 1 & 2), many from a single vessel in fabric 2, a jar with vertical slashes on the shoulder cordon (2nd century AD.)| also present, a triangular-rimmed bowl (later 2nd century AD.), and grooved shouldered jar (2nd century), and other jars (nos. 1 & 2). 7 sherds of Hadham redware, and 3 sherds of fabric 3, including a footing.
Early-Saxon (*) sherds: 6 sherds of fabric 7, including one with grooved pendant triangles.
22 miscellaneous crumbs.
2 fragments of daub.
A variously sized and abraded group - strangely enough the 2nd century Roman sherds are generally larger and less abraded.
- 008** 5 Roman grey ware sherds (fabrics 1 & 2)
1 sherd of Early-Saxon (*) fabrics 7 & 8 each.
All small and abraded sherds.

- 009** 2 Roman grey ware sherds (fabric 1)
4 Saxon sherds (fabric 7)
1 tile fragment
All small and abraded sherds.
- 010** 3 small and abraded Saxon sherds (fabric 7).
- 011** 5 small and abraded Saxon sherds (fabric 7).
- 013** 40 Saxon sherds (fabric 7), variously sized and abraded, several burnished, and several with combing, including four plain rims, one base and one with lattice produced by a two-toothed comb. 2 shell-tempered Saxon sherds (fabric 8).
16 fragments of daub.
- 014** 8 small sherds in fabric 1
- 015** 12 sherds in fabric 9 including jar rim (no.4)
1 Thetford sherd with applied cross-rubbing.
6 St. Neots sherds including inturned dish.
2 red tile fragments.
- 016** 4 Saxon sherds (fabric 7).
3 tile fragments.
- 017** 5 small, abraded sherds in fabric 9, including jar rim.
1 sherd in fabric 13.
6 sherds in fabric 12.
13 fragments of red tile.
- 018** c.20 fragments of variously sized sandy burnt? clay/daub.
- 021** 7 sherds in fabric 7 including footed base and plain rim.
1 rim sherd in fabric 8.
1 fragment of daub.
- 022** 15 sherds in fabric 9 including 4 rims (nos. 5 & 6).
4 sherds in St. Neots fabric, including one with applied rib.
1 sherd in fabric 12.
13 sherds in fabric 13, including twisted rope handle (no.7).
- 023** 8 Early-Saxon (*) sherds (fabric 7).
1 sherd in fabric 1?
1 sherd in fabric 8?
- 024** 1 large base sherd in fabric 7, possibly trimmed into disc.
- 025** 2 sherds in fabric 7, well burnished.
- 026** 1 sherd in fabric 7.
- 027** 1 fragment of abraded daub.
- 028** 1 sherd of fabric 7.
- 029** 7 sherds in fabric 9 including very flat handle.
5 sherds in fabric 12.
All small and abraded.

- 029.2** St. Neots spall/sherd.
 1 sherd in fabric 13.
 1 fragment of tile
 Samian foot ring
 St. Neots bowl rim.
 2 sherd in fabric 12.
 5 sherds in fabric 9, including jar rim (no.3).
 4 sherds of Roman grey ware (fabric 2).

Fieldwalking

- B** Tile fragment.
C 2 abraded grey ware shreds.
D 1 Roman fine grey ware, 1 coarse grey ware.
E 1 grey ware sherd, 2 post-medieval glazed sherds.
F Tile fragment, post-medieval glazed sherd.
G Tile fragment.
I Tile fragment.
J 3 glazed sherds.
K 1 glazed sherd.

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Spoil Shell-tempered sherd, and tile fragment; Thetford ware sherd possibly associated with feature 5 and Early-Saxon (*) sherd with feature 13; also 3 sherds of fabric 9, including jar rim associated with feature 40 (no.8).

- 002** 1 St. Neots sherd.
 1 post-medieval glazed sherd.
 1 tile fragment.
 1 clay pipestem.
- 005** 1 small, abraded St. Neots sherd.
- 007** 1 base sherd of fabric 9.
- 011** 3 large sherds of fabric 7 from different vessels (nos. 17 & 18). *c. 5th* century AD. (Early-Saxon (*)).
- 027** 1 large base sherd of fabric 7.
- 031** 2 sherds of fabric 9, including jar rim (no.11) and jug with part of spout broken off (no.12).
- 037** 1 rim of jar in fabric 9 (no.10).
- 038** 9 sherds of fabric 9 including 2 jar rims (no.9) and one sherd with applied rib with finger dimples large fragment of flat grey lava quern stone?
- 040** 3 sherds of fabric 9
 1 small abraded sherd of fabric 7.

DISCUSSION

The pottery from both sites is very similar (but see below) in that most fabrics, particularly the Early-Saxon (*) and medieval, recur in each excavation. The features on the two sites tend to fall fairly discreetly into Roman/Saxon and medieval without too much mixing. The Roman pottery is always with Early-Saxon (*), and not always any more abraded than the Saxon Sherds, so it may be incautious to simply call it residual, especially in one case where early Roman pottery is found in very good condition with more abraded Saxon material. A similar situation occurred at the cropmark site of Harston, Cambridgeshire (see Lucas, in Malim, 1992). Also, given the date of the Saxon pottery, it seems likely that we are dealing with activity continuous between the Roman and Saxon periods, i.e. 5th and earlier 6th century. In general, there is much more material of this date in evidence at site LINLLF91 (where it is also associated with building material) than at LLFSB92.

The Saxon pottery is chiefly of plain, but often burnished jars with simple rounded shoulders and upright or flaring rims. Of interest is the lugged handle from a similarly formed vessel (no.16), known locally with examples from the cemetery site at Lackford, Suffolk.

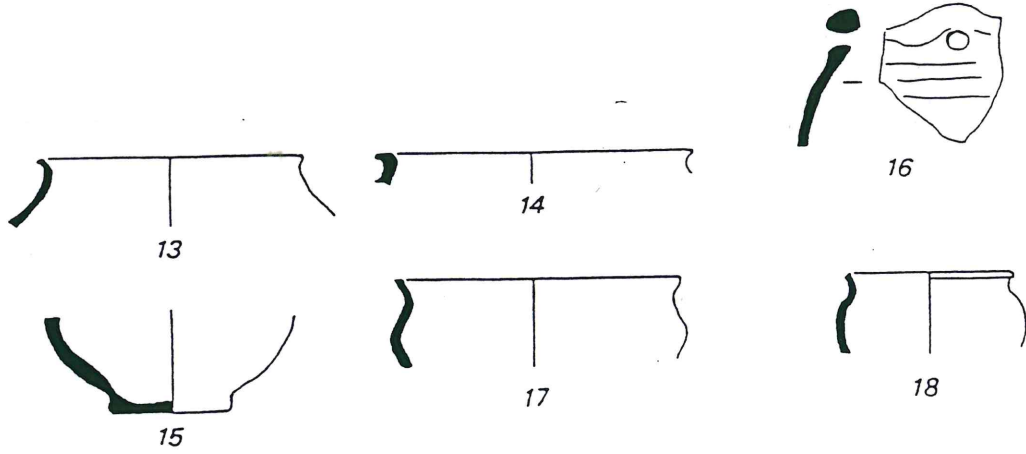
The medieval pottery is chiefly a local coarseware, with the occasional Thetford, and more commonly St. Neots-type sherd. The vessel forms tend chiefly to be jars with fairly tall necks and everted squarish rims, either flattened, hollowed or grooved. Rim diameters fall between 12 cm and 24 cm. The two glazed fabrics are both probably jugs. In date, the pottery tends to fall around the later 12th and 13th century, with some residual earlier 12th or 11th century sherds.

As far as one can tell from such a collection, there appears to be no ceramics dated to between the Early-Saxon (*) and medieval phases, i.e. between c.600 and 1100 AD.

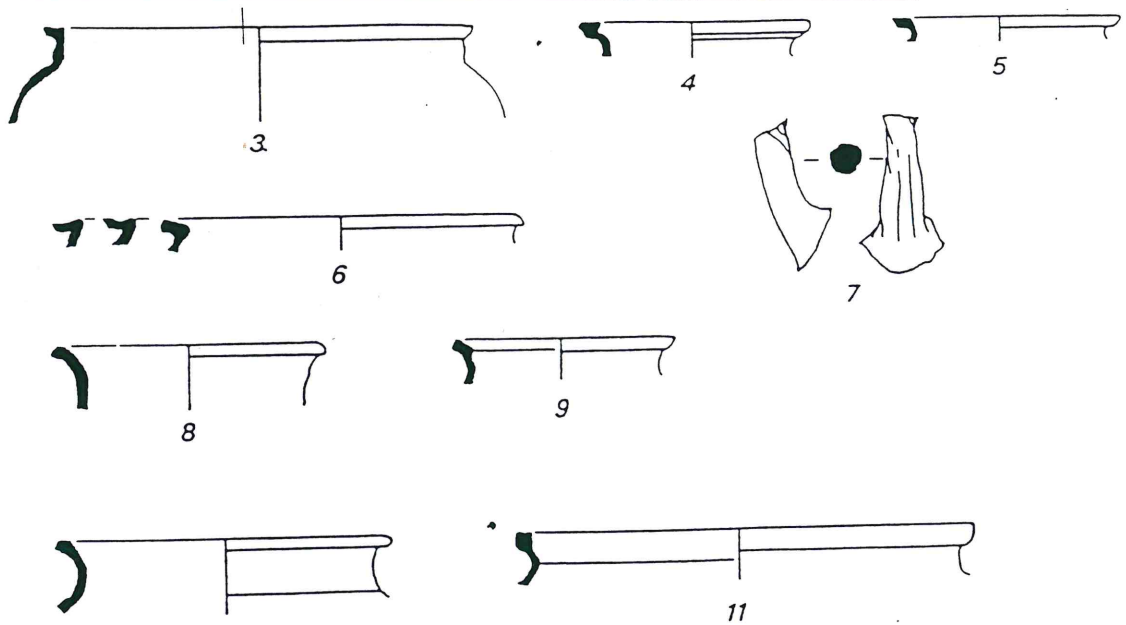
(*) Initial examination of pottery from several contexts (Appendix A) indicated an Early-Saxon date. Further examination by other pottery specialists has led to some uncertainty arising over the exact period of these pieces. To confirm the date a selection of the disputed pieces have been sent away for thermoluminescence dating and the results will be added to the report. As result of the testing certain aspects of the report may be changed, although not detracting from the general importance of the site and any recommendations made.



ROMANO-BRITISH FABRICS



EARLY SAXON FABRICS



EARLY MEDIEVAL FABRICS

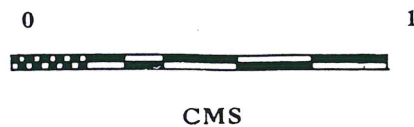
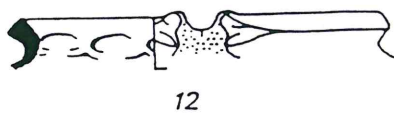


FIGURE 10

POTTERY FORMS FROM EXCAVATIONS AT
LITTLE LINTON FARM 1991 & 1992

GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS

Anglo-Saxon: The period dating between the withdrawal of the Roman legions in 410 and the Norman invasion of 1066. Within this period several ethnic groups from northern Europe vied for control of the British Isles, including the Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Danes, and Norwegians. The latter two groups are collectively known as the Vikings and became involved in British politics from the eighth century, later than the others. The Vikings were successful in occupying a large part of the north and Midlands of England, before providing a King (Cnut) for the whole of England. For most of this time England was divided up into several kingdoms until Saxon resistance to Viking incursions led to the unification of England under Aethelstan and Alfred.

Artefact: Any object made by people. Generally, this word is used for finds such as pottery, stone tools, or metal objects, but it can be used in a much wider context in that the landscape we have today is a product of human activity and is thus an artefact itself.

Bronze Age: Prehistoric period *c.* 2000 - 700 BC when bronze was used for many types of tools and weapons.

Cropmarks: Archaeological features below the ploughsoil can affect the growth of sensitive crops through moisture retention or loss. For example, the growth of cereal crops over buried ditches or pits will encourage rapid growth leading to tall, dark coloured plants, whereas walls and roads will lead to stunting and faster yellowing of the crop. These discrepancies in crop growth can be easily detected from the air, and by taking photographs the cropmark patterns can be plotted onto maps and given provisional interpretation.

Deserted Medieval Village (DMV): For various reasons medieval settlements were sometimes abandoned or shifted in location. Earthworks of the old village can often be seen showing the position of house platforms, crofts, lanes, fields and ponds.

Earthworks: Archaeological features that are still extant above the ground as banks and ditches, platforms, roads, ponds, canals etc. They were either constructed of soil or became covered by it at a later date, leaving the archaeology showing in relief.

Enclosures: An area defined by a continuous surrounding ditch. These may be enclosures around human settlements, fields, or paddocks for stock. Rectilinear enclosures are ones with straight sides and corners, whilst curvilinear enclosures are ones with rounded sides.

Holloway: A track that has been hollowed out by long usage.

Iron Age: Prehistoric period *c.* 700 BC - AD 43 when iron was used extensively for tools and weapons. The period traditionally ends with the Roman invasions of AD 43 but in fact there was a considerable time of adjustment after this date when the Iron Age way of life continued with little change from Roman influence.

Medieval: Historic period that begins with William the Conqueror's invasion in 1066. post-medieval is generally considered to date from 1500.

Mesolithic: The period from the end of the Last Ice Age at 10,000 BP until the start of the Neolithic period at *c.* 3500. The life style of the people was a continuation of hunting and gathering, no polished stone tools or pottery are associated with it in England.

Moat: In the medieval period enclosures *proliferated*. An area surrounded by water filled ditches would leave a platform or island on which to build a house. Several reasons have been suggested for these moated sites: defence in times of lawlessness, a ready source of water for the needs of the house and a anti-fire measure, a handy reservoir for fish and water-fowl, and in the response to the demands of fashion and prestige. These moated sites were often manors, and occasionally old manor houses are still found enclosed by their moat.

Neolithic: Prehistoric period *c.* 3500 - 2000 BC when farming and pottery were introduced. Stone tools of fine workmanship were produced and exchanged over long distances, but before the use of metals.

Posthole: A hole dug to receive a post. They can also result from driving posts into the ground. The latter, however, do not have distinct fills such as packing and a post pipe. A post pipe is the fill of a posthole which formed in the place of a removed post.

Ridge and Furrow: Medieval cultivation techniques led to a phenomenon of corrugated fields. Strips of land were allotted to individuals and a furrow was left between one person's strip and the next, leading to a corrugated ridge and furrow effect. Ridge and furrow shows up as cropmarks on air photographs and more rarely as earthworks in pasture fields.

Roman: Historic period AD 43 - 410 when much of Britain was part of the Roman empire. The term Romano-British is now widely used to describe the people of this period, as few were Roman themselves, but they were a provincial manifestation of the empire developing in a unique way. AD 410 was the date the legions were withdrawn, but the Romano-British culture continued for some time into the 5th century in tandem with Anglo-Saxon migration.

Stratigraphy: Order and relative position of strata. Deposits in archaeological sites will be layered one on top of another, with the highest layer being the latest being the latest deposits, thus giving a chronological relationship to the layers and the artefacts within them. Features (such as ditches, pits, or walls) cut through these layers will obviously date to later events, and will in turn contain their own discrete sequence of deposits. On the other hand features that have been covered by layers are obviously earlier than the deposition of those layers that seal them.

Thermoluminescence: A technique for dating fired clay, based on the fact that flaws in the lattice of any crystal will trap alpha particles, produced by radiation, which on heating will be released in the form of light. The quantity of light emitted will depend on three factors - the number of flaws in the crystal, the strength of the radioactivity to which it was exposed, and the duration of exposure. The second can be measured directly from the sample, and the first by retesting the sample after exposure to a radioactive source of known strength. These will allow the all-important third factor, the time since the crystal was last heated, to be calculated.