

**Former St Peter's Adult Training Centre,
Lindisfarne Road, Eye, Peterborough**

An Archaeological Evaluation

for David Wilson Homes

by M J Saunders

Thames Valley Archaeological Services

Site Code LRE00/05

April 1999

Summary

Site name: Former St Peter's Adult Training Centre, Lindisfarne Road, Eye, Peterborough

Grid reference: TF2235 0241

Site activity: Evaluation trenching

Date of project: March 1st–7th, 22nd and 23rd, 2000

Site code: LRE00/05

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: M John Saunders

Area of site: *c.* 1.54 hectares

Summary of results: A single posthole and four linear features were identified in three of the evaluation trenches. One linear feature contained two sherds of probable late Iron Age/early Roman pottery; another contained six pieces of fired clay. However, these linear features are not thought to be of archaeological origin and probably reflect relatively modern patterns of drainage runs. A number of 20th century field drains were also present.

Monuments identified: None.

Location of archive: Presently held by Thames Valley Archaeological Services, 47–49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5NR, but it is intended that the archive be deposited with Peterborough Museum in due course.

Former St Peter's Adult Training Centre, Lindisfarne Road, Eye, Peterborough An Archaeological Evaluation

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Report 00/05

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at the former St Peter's Adult Training Centre, Lindisfarne Road, Eye, Peterborough (TF 2235 0241) (Figs 1 and 2). The work was commissioned by Ms Isabelle Blavier of David Wilson Homes (South Midlands), Wilson House, Orchard Hill, Little Billing, Northampton, NN3 9AG.

A planning application (no. 99/00776/FUL) has been made to Peterborough City Council for the construction of 36 houses with associated access roads and landscaping on the site. This has been approved subject to a condition that requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological work. As it is possible that archaeological deposits will be present on the site, which may be damaged or destroyed by groundworks, a desktop assessment and field evaluation in the form of trial trenching has been requested. This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Policy and Planning Guidance Note, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990) and the Council's policies on archaeology. This is to provide information on the archaeological potential of the site that can be used to draw up a mitigation strategy to minimise the effects of development on the archaeological deposits. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr B Robinson, Archaeological Officer for Peterborough City Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by M John Saunders, David Hope and Andy Taylor in March 2000. The site code is LRE00/05.

Desktop Assessment

An appraisal of documentary sources, historic and modern maps, the Peterborough Sites and Monuments Record and aerial photographic evidence was made to assist decisions on the evaluation strategy.

Cartographic Evidence

Four maps were consulted at Huntingdon Record Office and Peterborough Local Studies Library (Appendix 1). The earliest map examined was the 1821 Inclosure map of Eye (Fig. 3). This shows the site with two rectangular plots of land on the western side and a single elongated plot on the eastern side of the development area. These plots are situated to the rear of properties fronting the south side of the Turnpike, now the High Street, and it's

junction with Peterborough Road. A ditch marks the southern boundary. Also examined was the First Edition of the Ordnance Survey dated 1887 (Fig. 4). This shows little change compared to the earlier map although the three plots of land have become two, divided by a footpath that corresponds with the previous north–south hedge boundary. Trees are shown in the north-eastern part of the site, some of which appear to be within a small rectangular enclosure. A small pond is also shown immediately to the west of this enclosure. The Ordnance Survey map of 1901 (not illustrated) shows no change, except that the footpath is no longer marked. The 1972 Ordnance Survey map shows that the site had been built upon, with the St Peter’s Adult Training Centre in the southern part of the site and The Croft in the plot of land immediately to the north. Walsingham Way and Lindisfarne Road had also been built. Thereafter the site remained unaltered until the demolition of the Training Centre prior to redevelopment.

Archaeological Background

Eye lies on a peninsula that was almost an island before drainage of the fens and this is reflected in its Saxon name ‘e.g.’ (island) (Hall 1987, 30).

The Peterborough Sites and Monuments Record was consulted in February 2000 and this revealed a number of entries for the surrounding area (Fig. 2; Appendix 2) but none for the development site itself. The earliest finds are a number of Mesolithic flints including three cores and four scrapers from Eyebury Farm (2), a scraper (3) and two pebble maceheads with hour-glass perforations (4, 5). A single polished flint axe (1) is the only Neolithic find recorded. Two Bronze Age socketed axes (6, 7), spearheads and celts (8, 9) and a large bronze cauldron (possibly Bronze Age) (10) are also listed. A Bronze Age domestic site lies in the vicinity of Keys Park to the south-west (11). A single Iron Age site is recorded also to the south-west (12) and a complex of overlapping enclosures are noted in the vicinity of Oxney House to the south (13). These are of Prehistoric, Iron Age and Roman date. There are also a number of entries for the Roman period including a tile kiln (14), fragments of tegulae, hypocaust and box-tiles (15) and a coin of Faustina (16). A possible Roman temple site has been identified from aerial photographs (17) and two skeletons and Roman pottery were located to the south-west close to the Car Dyke (18). The remainder of the entries relate to the Medieval period: the deerpark of Eyebury Farm and its earthwork rampart (19) (the ditched southern boundary of the application site may represent a continuation of the line of the original deerpark rampart); and manorial buildings of the moated site of the Abbots of Peterborough including a dovecote, warren and gatehouse at Eyebury Farm (20). The site of the grange of Peterborough Abbey at Oxney lies some distance to the south (21). The manorial buildings and the

grange are Grade 2 Listed Buildings. The Medieval core of the village is thought to lie adjacent to the main road with surrounding areas being open fields (Hall 1987, fig. 17).

The Fenland Survey (Hall 1987) fieldwalked a substantial part of the arable areas of the parish, including fields immediately to the south of the site. Relatively few Prehistoric finds were recovered whereas Roman finds were fairly typical. No finds were recorded for the fields to the south of the site. A small fen basin developed to the south of the site during the Iron Age, Roman and Medieval periods and there is, therefore, the possibility that features related to later Prehistoric enclosed landscapes may be encountered during the evaluation (Hall 1987, 32, 33 fig. 15).

Aerial Photographic Evidence

Aerial photographs from the University of Cambridge Committee for Aerial Photography were examined, dating from 1951 through to 1988. The earliest (1951) indicates that the site may have been covered by ridge and furrow up to the early 1950s, whereas the 1954 photo shows the area, or part of it, as being rough pasture. The 1982 vertical photograph shows some shadow marks in the crops in the two fields immediately to the south of the proposal area but these are not sufficiently well defined to be clearly of archaeological interest. In addition, 25 aerial photographs held in the National Monuments Record were examined and a number of cropmark features were apparent in the surrounding area, probably representing Prehistoric field systems.

Conclusion

From this rapid desk-top study it is clear that the site lies within an ancient landscape and it is possible that archaeological remains from all periods may be present. Apart from the discovery of a pond on the site (see cartographic evidence above) the desk-top assessment did not reveal any evidence to alter the proposed location of the evaluation trenches.

Location, Topography and Geology

Eye is a nucleated village lying on the A47 Leicester–Norwich road, on the eastern outskirts of Peterborough (Fig. 1). The site itself comprises a rectangular parcel of land formerly occupied by the St Peter’s Adult Training Centre. It is 1.54 hectares in extent and located to the south of the A47 at the western end of Lindisfarne Road (Fig. 2). It is bounded to the south by a drainage ditch and to the north by the boundary with The Croft. The site slopes from the north-east (5.69m above Ordnance Datum) to south-west (4.47m above Ordnance Datum). The

site is described as being on the sand and gravel capped Oxford Clay (Hall 1987) and this was confirmed during the evaluation.

Archaeological Background

The brief provided by the City Council Archaeologist and the rapid desk-based assessment (above) have highlighted the archaeological potential of the site. Both indicate that the site lies within an area from which a number of sites and finds of various periods have been recorded in the Sites and Monuments Record (Fig. 2). There are a number of finds of Mesolithic and Neolithic worked flint in the area and the site lies close to the Car Dyke, along which Roman and later settlement can be found. A Medieval deerpark exists to the east of the site and the ditch marking the southern boundary may be a continuation of the park pale. The site lies on raised ground adjacent to fenland in a topographic location less prone to flooding and likely to have been preferentially occupied at many times during the past.

Objectives and Methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological or palaeoenvironmental deposits within the area of development. Specific research aims of the project were to determine whether archaeologically relevant levels had survived on the site, bearing in mind the site's previous development history, and to determine whether archaeological deposits of any period were present. The potential and significance of any such deposits will be assessed according to various research priorities such as those set out in *Exploring our Past* (English Heritage 1991, 36) and the *English Heritage Research Agenda* (English Heritage 1997, 44), or any other local or thematic research priorities, as necessary.

A total of 20 trenches were excavated in the positions shown on Figure 5. It was intended to position trenches 18 and 20 to investigate the pond feature and rectangular enclosure depicted on the 1887 Ordnance Survey map. In the event these had to be repositioned due to on-site constraints; trench 18 was repositioned due to the presence of site cabins for the redevelopment and trench 20 was moved because of a sewer. Trench 14 was positioned to examine the possibility that the boundary ditch at the southern end of the site may represent a continuation of the Medieval deerpark boundary. All trenches were dug using a JCB-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under continuous archaeological supervision, to the surface of archaeological deposits or the undisturbed natural, whichever was uppermost. All certain or probable features were hand cleaned and sufficient of these were excavated to satisfy the terms of the brief. A metal detector was used on the spoilheaps

and features to maximise the recovery of small finds. In the event only modern material was recovered, mainly demolition debris from the former St Peter's Adult Training Centre.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 3.

Results

The stratigraphy in all the trenches typically consisted of turf and topsoil over a sandy clay subsoil, onto grey-brown natural clay with sand patches. There was a great deal of root disturbance in many of the trenches and, especially in the south-western part of the site, the ground was severely disturbed by the recent grubbing-out of trees. Ceramic field drains were present in almost every trench and others contained modern services including a sewer and high voltage electricity cable. Two possible features examined in Trenches 1 and 5 were also found to be field drains. Only three of the trenches (3, 4 and 5) were found to contain possible archaeological features; a posthole and several gullies (Fig. 5). These all lay in the northern part of the site. Only those trenches containing possible archaeological features are described in detail below, but see also Appendix 3 for the dimensions and stratigraphy of all trenches.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was situated in the north-east corner of the site (Fig. 5) and the stratigraphy consisted of 0.30m of turf and topsoil over 0.42m of sandy clay subsoil onto grey-brown natural clay with sand/gravel patches. Two features were present; a gully (3) and a combination of three parallel gullies (4) (Figs 6 and 7). A modern sewer crossed the extreme western end of the trench running in a north-south direction. Gully 3 was 0.38m wide and 0.18m deep. It entered the trench at its eastern end and ran in a straight line for approximately 7m before going beneath the southern baulk. It had near vertical sides and a flat base (Fig. 7, section 3) and its sandy fill (52) contained numerous snail shells and occasional flecks of charcoal. Two sherds of pottery were recovered from this feature (see below). Feature 4 was unusual in that it consisted of three adjacent gullies running in a north-south direction, which appeared to have been dug as a single event. They each contained identical fills, a primary fill (55) of dark brown, stoney, silty-clay loam and a secondary fill (53) of looser dark brown silty-clay loam (Fig. 7, section 5). These combined gullies were 1.90–2.00m wide and 0.70m deep in the middle gully. A number of pieces of fired clay were recovered from the secondary fill.

Trench 4

Trench 4 also lay in the north-east part of the site and the stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of turf and topsoil over 0.25m of sandy clay subsoil, onto grey-brown natural clay with sand patches. It contained two features, a posthole (1) and a gully (2) (Figs 6 and 7), which lay adjacent to one another at the eastern end of the trench. The posthole was 0.25m in diameter and only 0.06m deep, suggesting a large degree of truncation. It had near vertical sides and a flat base. Gully 2 was 0.51m wide and 0.24m deep and lay immediately to the east of the posthole. It had steeply sloping sides and a flat base and crossed the trench in a north-east/south-west direction. Both features were filled with a yellowish-brown sandy clay but neither contained any finds.

Trench 5

Trench 5 was situated in the north-west part of the site and the stratigraphy consisted of 0.30m of turf and topsoil over 0.38m of sandy clay subsoil, onto grey-brown natural clay with sand patches. This contained a narrow gully (5) (Fig. 6), which crossed the trench in an east-west direction and was 0.50m wide at the surface with a maximum depth of 0.23m (Fig. 7, section 4). Its profile was unusual in that it suddenly narrowed at a depth of 0.12m to become 0.19m wide. It appeared to be a cut for a ceramic field drain, although no pipe was present, and the total absence of finds, together with its shape, might suggest that this is a modern feature.

Finds

The Ceramic Finds by Elaine Morris

Ceramic finds were recovered from two features in Trench 3. Six pieces of fired clay (not briquetage) weighing 154gms came from feature 4 (53) and two sherds of pottery came from feature 3 (52). The larger sherd is hard-fired, possibly wheelthrown, and appears to be grog-tempered. It is likely to be late pre-Roman Iron Age/early Roman in date and the curved profile to this flake of a sherd supports this interpretation. The other tiny sherd is vesicular, i.e. full of voids in the shape of what once was probably shell. The date could also be Roman and the firing technique does not dispute this, but it could be later Prehistoric.

Conclusion

Only a small number of potential archaeological features were found during the evaluation trenching and only two contained artefacts. With the exception of what is possibly a modern feature (5) in Trench 5, the remainder are confined to the north-east corner of the site. It is possible that features 3 and 4 in Trench 3 are of late Iron Age/early Roman date although, with feature 3 in particular, only two small sherds of pottery were found and the

very straight nature of this feature may suggest that it is of modern origin and that the pottery is residual. No dating evidence was recovered from features 1 and 2 in Trench 4. Much of the site had been disturbed by the construction of services, including sewers and, in the area of the former buildings, by brick and concrete foundations. Field drains were also present right across the site. No evidence was found in Trench 14 of a bank associated with the ditch forming the southern boundary of the site and it seems unlikely, therefore, that it represents a continuation of the rampart of the nearby Medieval deer park. An area of blue-grey clay was observed in Trench 9, although this did not appear to be alluvium and is more likely associated with the construction of an adjacent brick sewer and inspection manhole. No peat deposits were encountered in any of the evaluation trenches.

References

English Heritage, 1991, *Exploring Our Past*, HMSO

English Heritage, 1997, English Heritage Archaeology Division Research Agenda, Draft

Hall, D, 1987, Fenland Project 2, Cambridgeshire Survey, Peterborough to March, *East Anglian Archaeology* **35**, 30–37

PPG 16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Department of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance Note 16, HMSO

Appendix 1: List of maps consulted

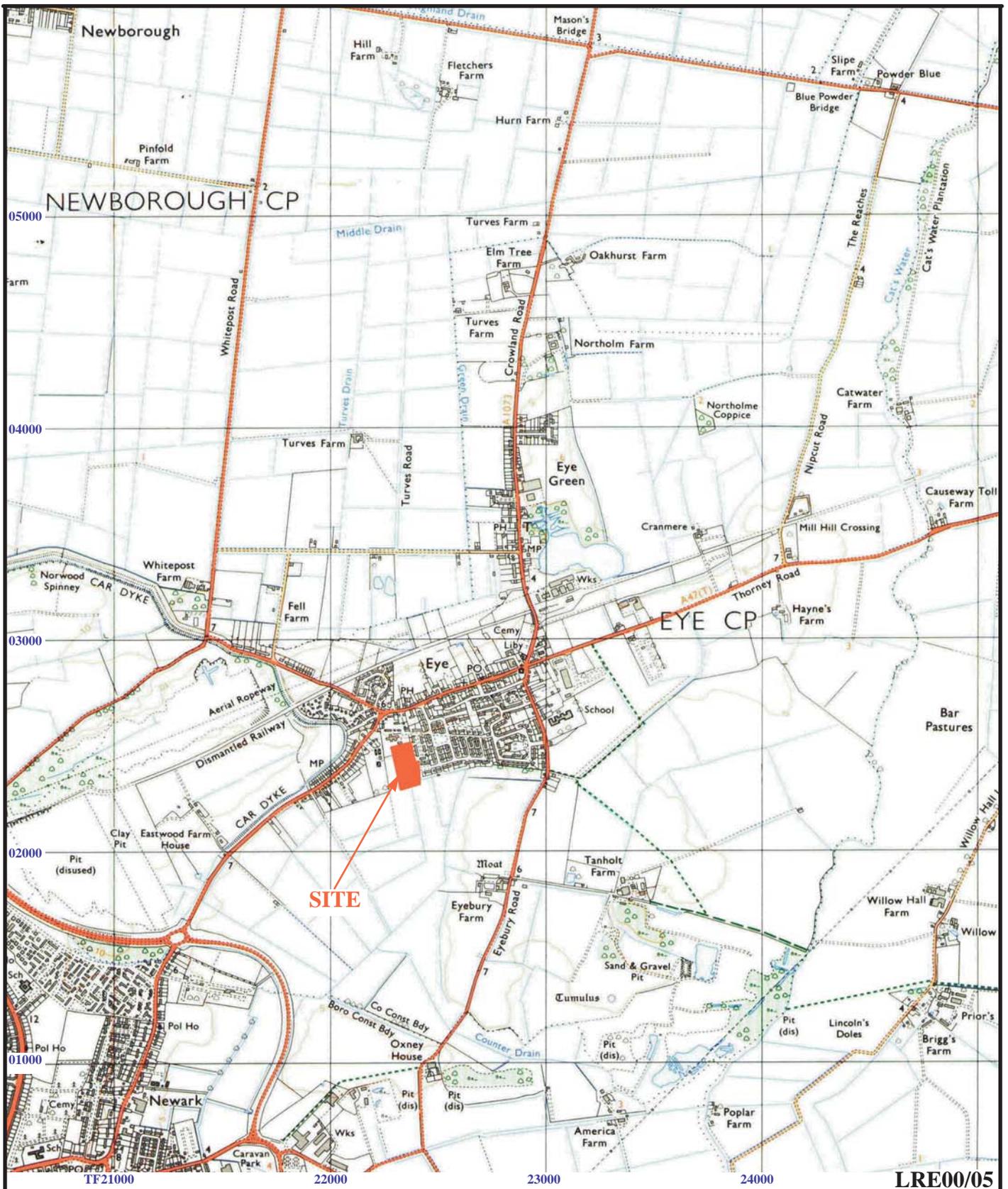
1. 1821 Inclosure Map of Eye
2. 1887 First Edition Ordnance Survey, 25", Northants. Sheet IX.I
3. 1901 Ordnance Survey, 25", Northants. Sheet IX.I (Cambs X.2.6)
4. 1972 Ordnance Survey, 1:2500

Appendix 2: Sites and Monuments Record entries for the vicinity of the site (Fig. 2)

<i>Fig. No.</i>	<i>SMR No.</i>	<i>Grid Ref.</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Period</i>
1	03007	TF228-/024-	Handaxe	Neolithic
2	02978	TF227-/018-	Flint tools	Mesolithic
3	02979	TF227-/028-	Flint scraper	Mesolithic
4	02994	TF22--/02--	Pebble macehead	Mesolithic
5	50495	TF2290/0280	Pebble macehead	Mesolithic
6	50252	TF2205/0206	Socketed axe	Bronze Age
7	03021a	TF22--/02--	Socketed axe	Bronze Age
8	03021b	TF22--/02--	Spearheads and celts	?
9	50253	TF2240/0220	Spearheads and axes	?
10	02964	TF2243/0096	Bronze cauldron	?
11	02985	TF217-/015-	Mound, saltern, settlement	Bronze Age, Iron Age
12	03025	TF218-/016-	Settlement	Iron Age
13	08376	TF223-/010-	Enclosures	Prehistoric, Iron Age, Roman
14	03010	TF214-/029-	?Tile kiln	Roman
15	03155	TF215-/027-	Ring ditch, tiles	Roman
16	03021	TF22--/02--	Coin of Faustina	Roman
17	08370	TF2306/0118	?Temple	?Roman
18	00182	TF2142/0195	Inhumations	Roman
19	03028	TF228-/023-	Deer park rampart	Medieval
20	01040	TF228-/018-	Moated site and buildings	Medieval
21	01039	TF2250/0095	Peterborough Abbey grange	Medieval/post Medieval

Appendix 3: Trench details

<i>Trench No.</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	20.00	1.60	0.62 (S) 0.70 (N)	0.22–0.30m turf and topsoil over 0.40m sandy clay subsoil onto grey-brown natural clay. Feature 7.
2	19.50	1.60	0.70	0.35m turf and topsoil over 0.35m sandy clay subsoil onto grey-brown natural clay with sand patches.
3	19.00	1.60	0.82 (SW) 0.84 (NE)	0.30m turf and topsoil over 0.42m sandy clay subsoil onto grey-brown natural clay with sand/gravel patches. Features 3, 4 and modern sewer trench.
4	18.50	1.60	0.52	0.20m turf and topsoil over 0.25m sandy clay subsoil onto grey-brown natural clay with sand patches. Features 1 and 2.
5	19.40	1.60	0.70 (SW) 0.80 (NE)	0.30m turf and topsoil over 0.38m sandy clay subsoil onto grey-brown natural clay with sand patches. Features 5 and 6.
6	22.00	1.60	0.36 (S) 0.90 (N)	0.50m turf and topsoil over 0.25m sandy clay subsoil onto grey-brown natural clay with sand patches. Topsoil truncated at S end. Field drain at 14.40m.
7	18.50	1.60	0.53	0.22m turf and topsoil over 0.30m sandy clay subsoil onto grey-brown natural clay with sand patches.
8	19.20	1.60	0.68	0.42m turf and topsoil over 0.25m sandy clay subsoil onto grey-brown natural clay with sand patches.
9	21.00	1.60	0.63 (SW)	0.24m turf and topsoil over 0.30m sandy clay subsoil onto grey-brown natural clay with sand patches. From 6m to N end of trench much truncation by building foundations.
10	18.80	1.60	0.75	0.42m turf and topsoil over 0.33m sandy clay subsoil onto grey-brown natural clay.
11	22.30	1.60	0.66 (SE) 0.63 (NW)	0.35–0.38m turf and topsoil over 0.28m sandy clay subsoil onto grey-brown natural clay. Much disturbed due to grubbed out trees.
12	20.00	1.60	0.72 (S) 0.64 (N)	0.30m turf and topsoil over 0.35m sandy clay subsoil onto grey-brown natural clay with sand patches at S end; 0.23m of made ground over 0.27m topsoil over 0.14m sandy clay subsoil onto grey-brown natural clay.
13	22.00	1.60	0.63 (W) 0.65 (E)	0.20m made ground over 0.24m topsoil over 0.15m sandy clay subsoil onto grey-brown natural clay. Possible feature found to be field drain. Much disturbance at E end by services.
14	19.00	1.60	0.80	0.45m turf and topsoil over 0.35m sandy clay subsoil onto grey-brown natural clay.
15	19.50	1.60	0.68	0.38m turf and topsoil over 0.30m sandy clay subsoil onto grey-brown natural clay.
16	22.00	1.60	0.52	0.25m turf and topsoil over 0.22m sandy clay subsoil onto grey-brown natural clay with sand patches. Sewer pipe and two field drains.
17	19.00	1.60	0.48	0.22m turf and topsoil over 0.22m sandy clay subsoil onto grey-brown natural clay with sand patches. Sewer pipe and electricity cable.
18	11.00	1.60	0.68 (NW) 0.50 (SW)	0.10m turf and topsoil over 0.20m sandy clay subsoil onto grey-brown natural clay. Topsoil truncated at SE end. Trench repositioned due to live sewer and abandoned due to live high voltage electricity cable.
19	18.00	1.60	0.63	0.34m turf and topsoil over 0.26m sandy clay subsoil onto grey-brown natural clay with sand patches.
20	10.50	1.60	0.35 (S) 0.70 (N)	Made ground onto grey-brown natural clay. Heavily truncated by foundations and sewer pipe.

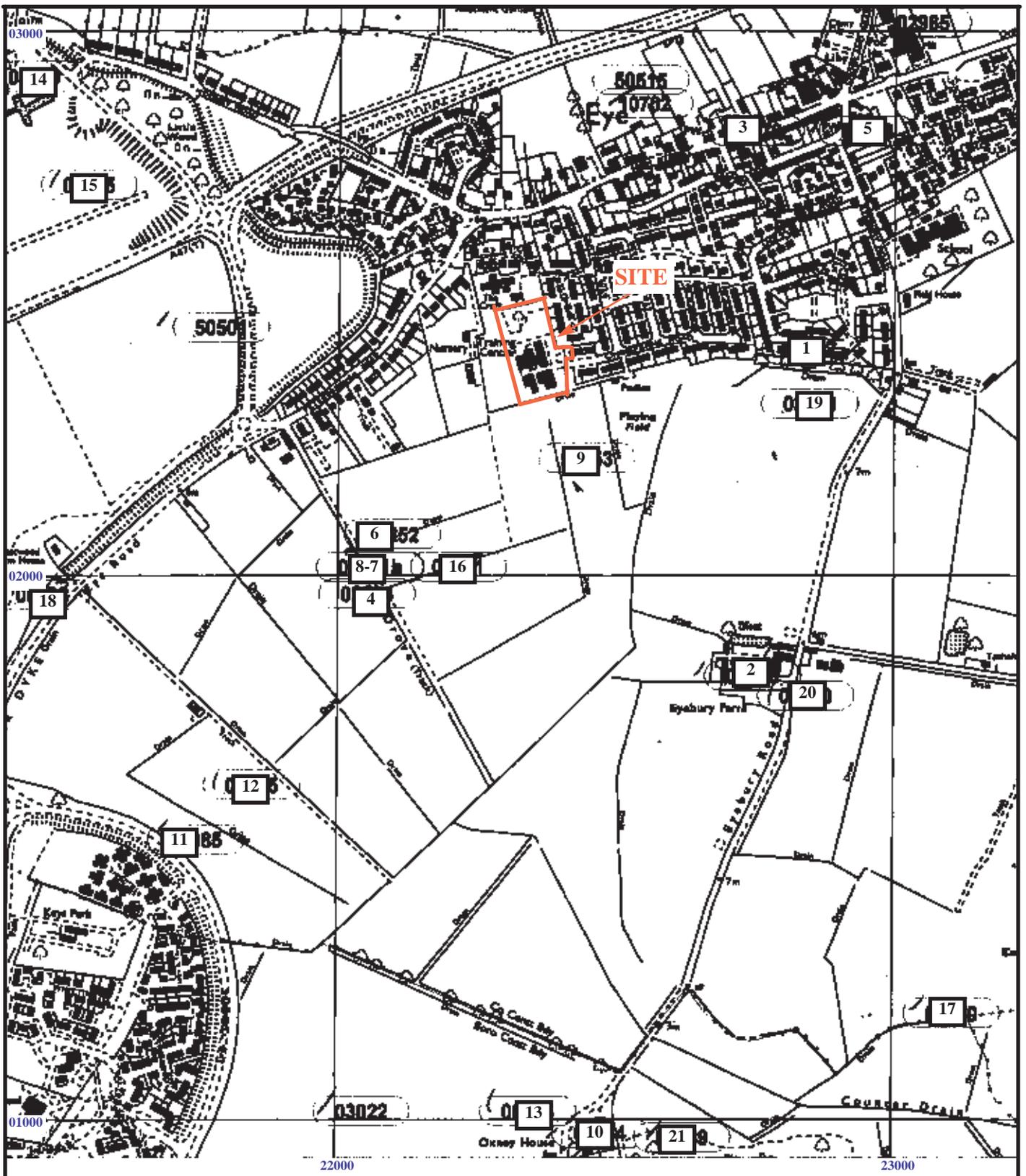


Lindisfarne Road, Eye, Peterborough, 2000

Figure 1. Location of site within Eye.

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Pathfinder 898 TF20/30 1:25000
 Ordnance Survey Licence AL52324A0001

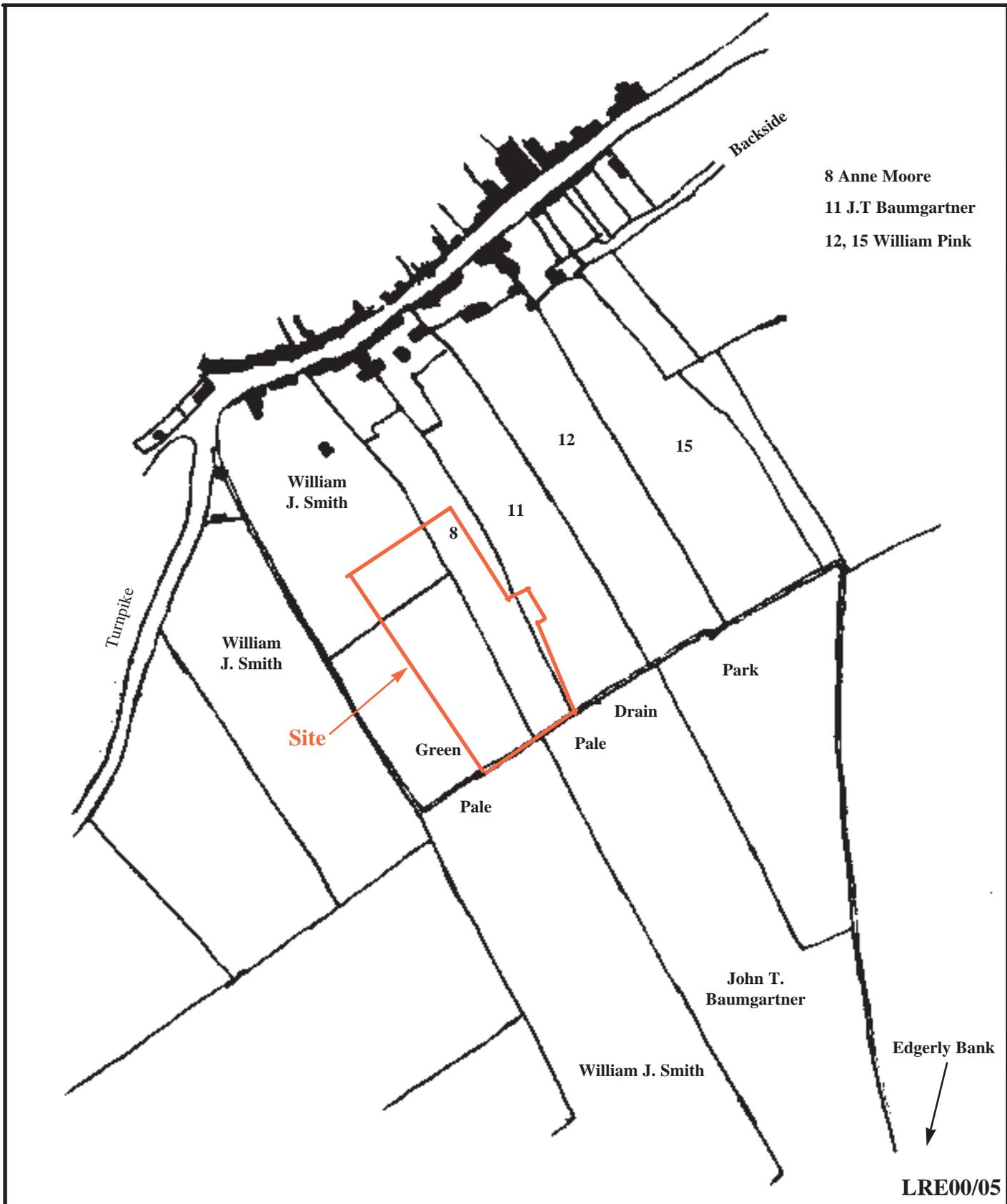
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Figure 2. Location of site within Eye showing SMR entries.

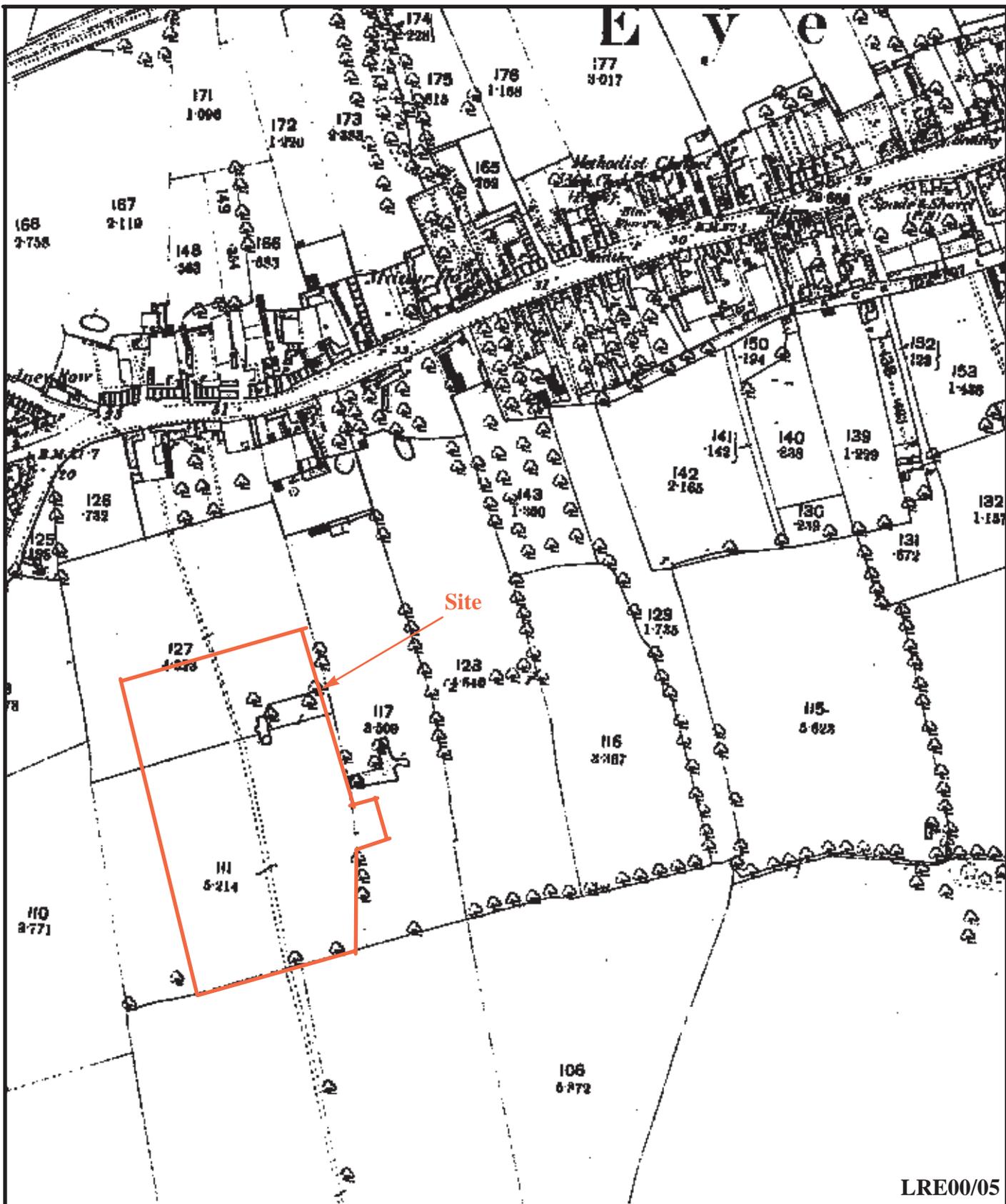
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Figure 3. Inclosure map, 1821.

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Figure 4. Ordnance Survey 1st. edition, 1887.

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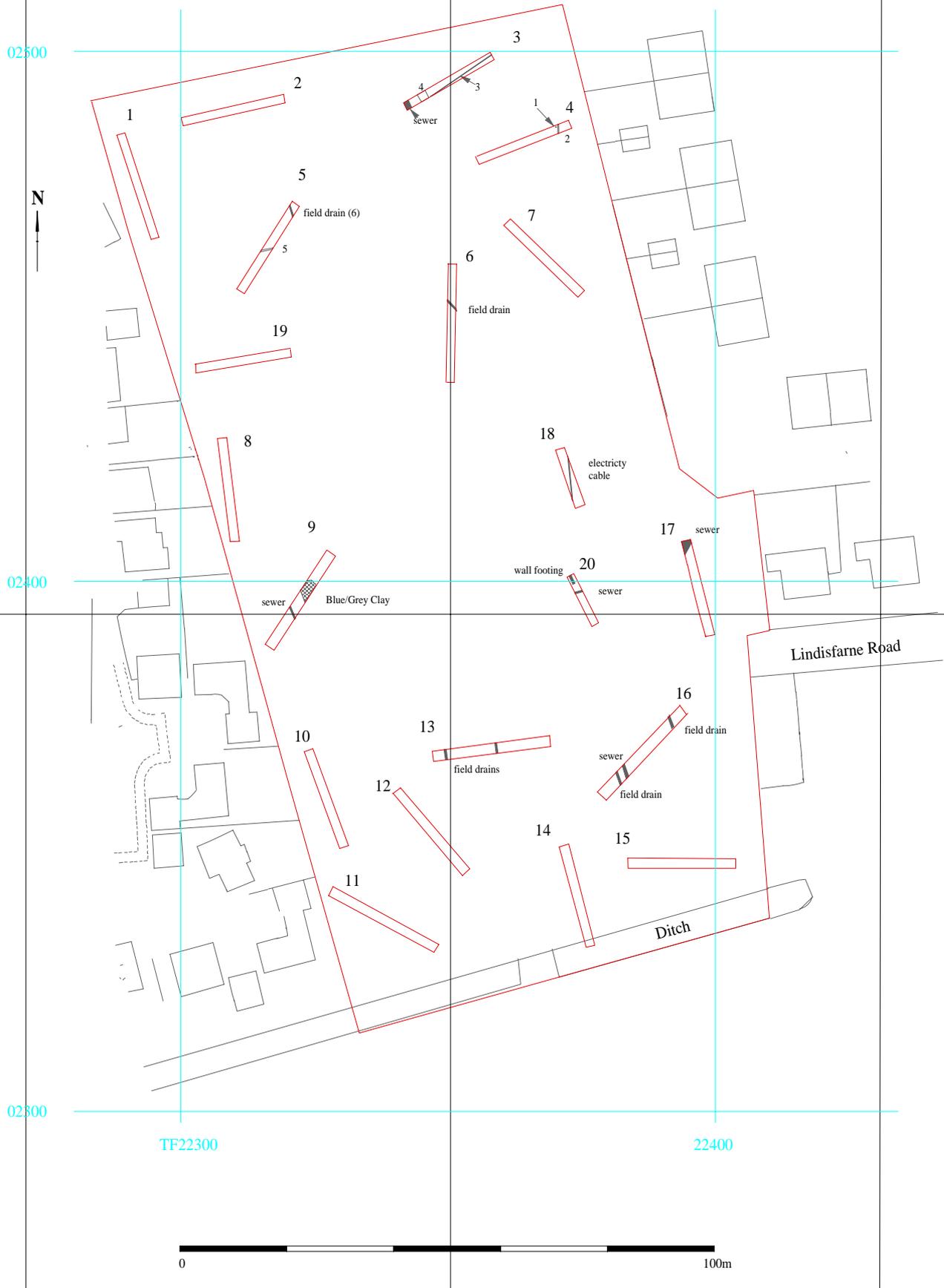


Figure 5. Plan of trenches showing excavated archaeological features.

Lindisfarne Road, Eye, Peterborough, 2000

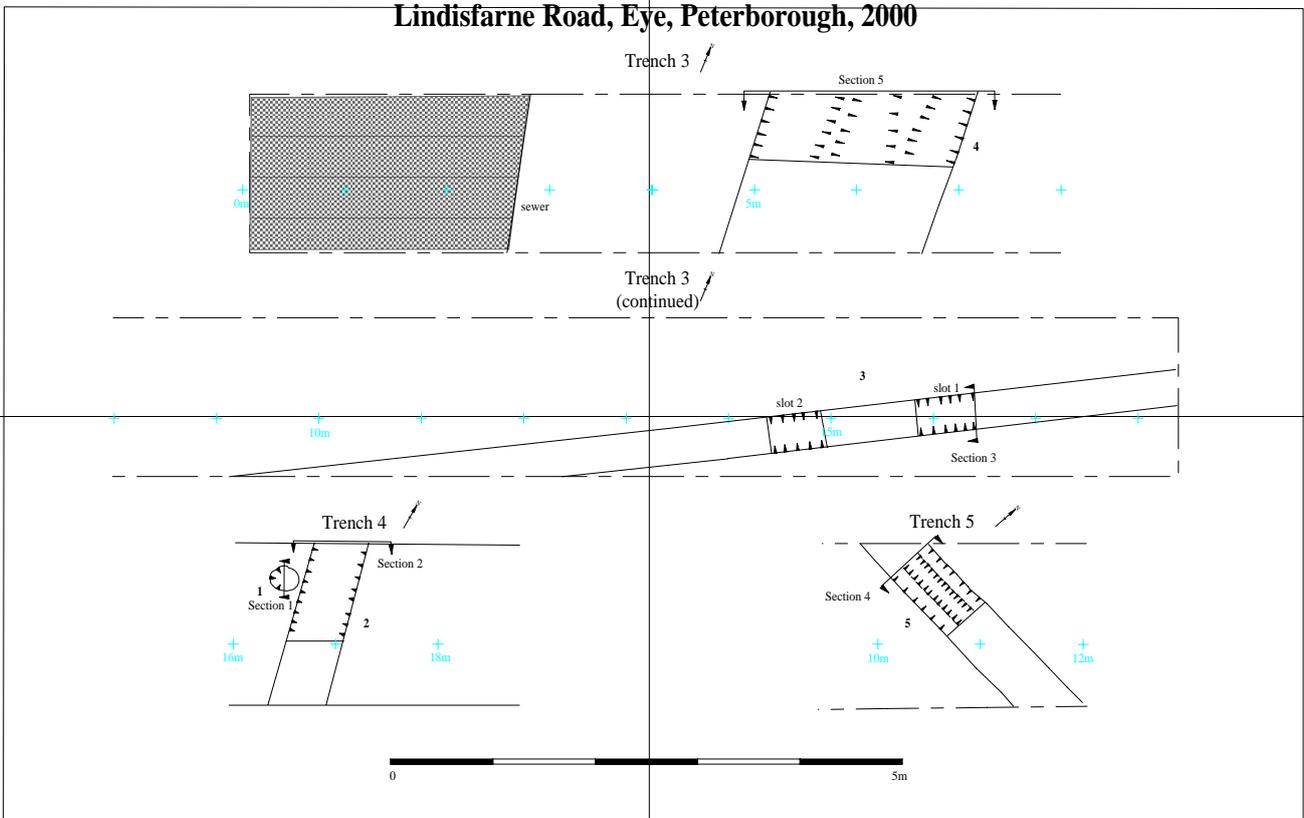
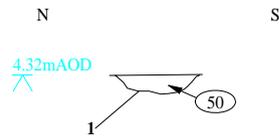


Figure 6. Plans of trenches 3, 4 and 5 showing all excavated features.

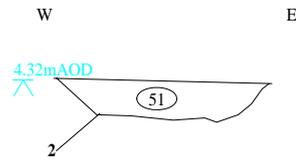
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Lindisfarne Road, Eye, Peterborough, 2000

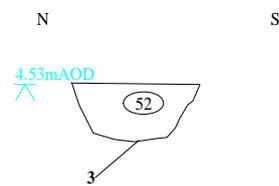
Section 1, Trench 4



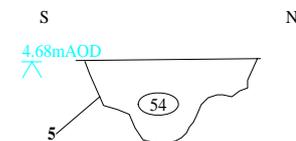
Section 2, Trench 4



Section 3, Trench 3



Section 4, Trench 5



Section 5, Trench 3

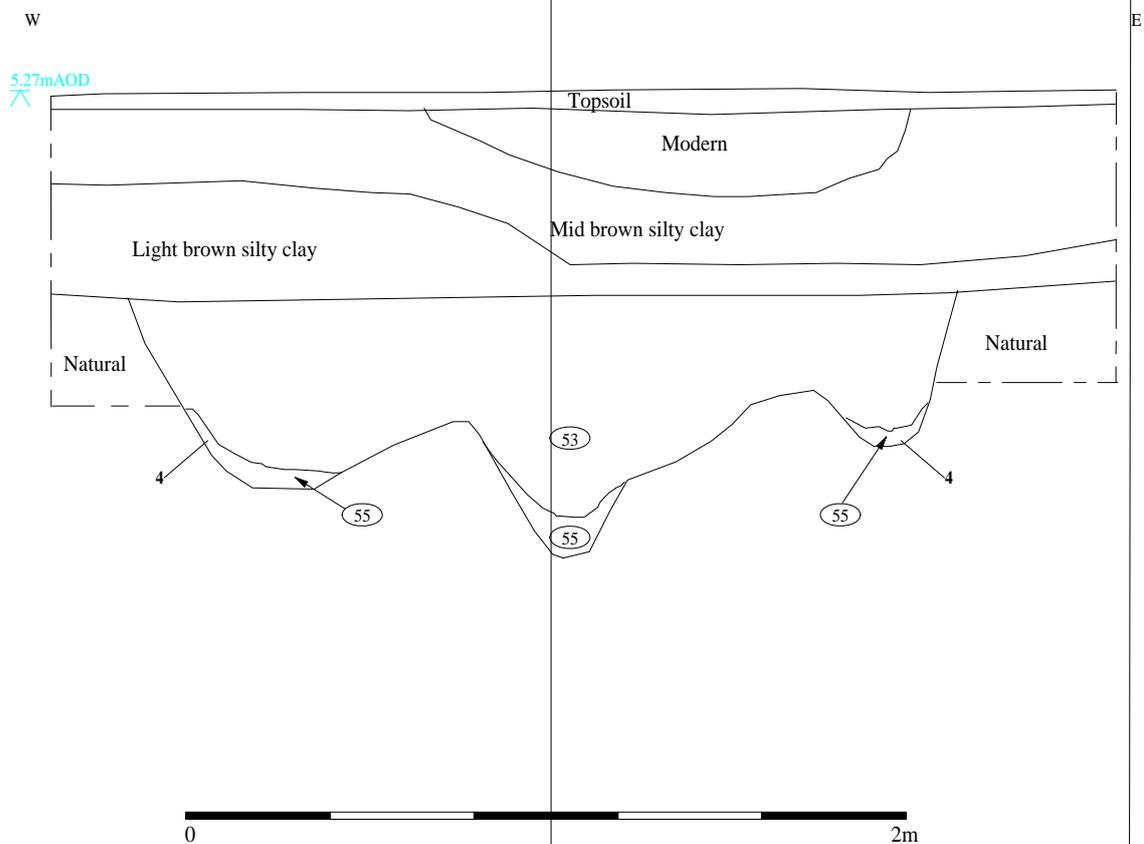


Figure 7. Sections 1-5.