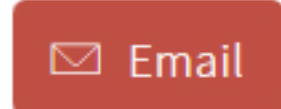


Nottinghamshire National Mapping Programme project



The Nottinghamshire National Mapping Programme (NMP) project mapped and recorded archaeology from aerial photographs. It was carried out in a partnership: one part was the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME) later to be merged with English Heritage, now Historic England; the other was Nottinghamshire County Council. The objective was to create a consistent standard of aerial photograph mapping and interpretation. This was in the face of the on-going threat to archaeological remains from industrial activity and re-development.

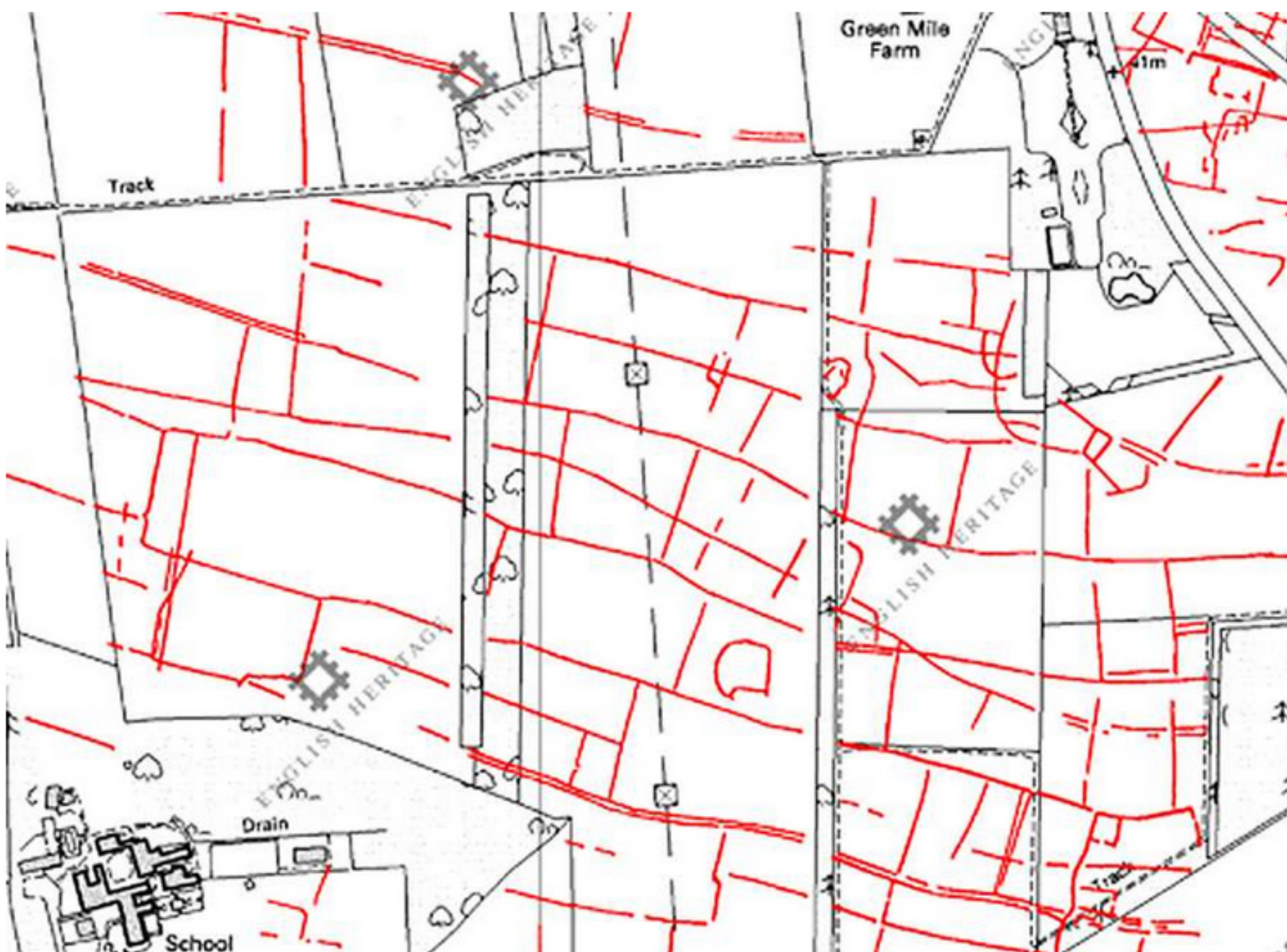


Cropmarks of enclosures near Shelford, Nottinghamshire, photographed on 25-JUN-2009 (NMR 20885/50) © Historic England; photo by Dave MacLeod

Air photograph mapping

The project began early in 1991 and was re-specified in December 1993 for incorporation into the NMP. The mapping work was done by Chris Cox (Air Photo Services Ltd) and Alison Deegan, who also wrote the report. The project area abutted the National Forest NMP project to the south and the Lincolnshire NMP to the east, along the Trent Valley. The Ordnance Survey map quarter sheets along this border were divided between the Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire projects. This was done in a way that ensured the River Trent was entirely within the Nottinghamshire NMP. The north end of Nottinghamshire was later abutted by the Magnesian Limestone NMP Project.

Nottinghamshire includes a range of varied landscapes which each affect how well archaeology shows up on aerial photographs. Cropmarks are common on the western limestones, the Sherwood sandstones north of Nottingham, and the sands and gravels of the Trent Valley. Derrick Riley first drew attention to the levelled archaeological landscapes of the Sherwood Sandstones in the late 1970s. He mapped and published his results in 1980 in 'Early landscape from the air'.



An example of the extensive Iron Age coaxial field systems found on the Sherwood Sandstones north of Nottingham. Air photo mapping © Historic England; OS background map © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Historic England 100019088. 2009.

The archaeology

A large range of sites types was recorded during this project. Prehistoric burial and ritual sites include a newly identified henge at Gunthorpe. Defensive sites mapped included:

- Iron Age promontory forts and hillforts
- Roman forts and camps
- Several mottes
- And civil war forts

Note that 20th century military sites were not recorded by this project.

Evidence for settlement is equally broad, including simple and complex arrangements of enclosures. Those dating to the Iron Age and Roman periods are often set within contemporary landscape divisions, commonly coaxial field systems. These coaxial field systems extend north into the Magnesian Limestone NMP project area.