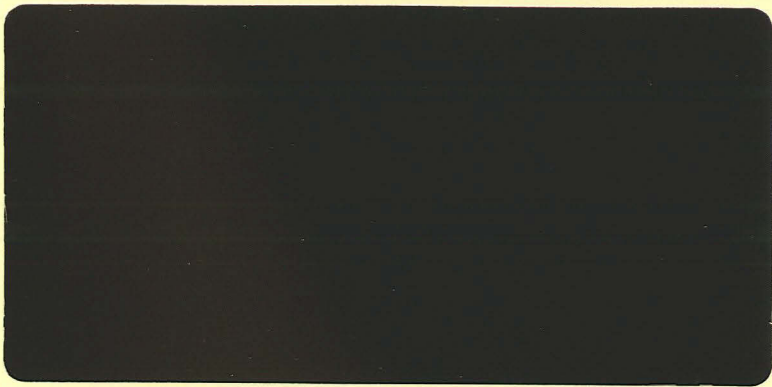


**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
OF A PIPELINE AT GEEST FOODS
WEST MARSH ROAD,
SPALDING,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(SWM 98)**



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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
OF A PIPELINE AT GEEST FOODS
WEST MARSH ROAD,
SPALDING,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(SWM 98)**

Work Undertaken For
Lincolnshire County Council

Report Compiled by
P. Cope-Faulkner BA (Hons) AIFA

March 1999

National Grid Reference: TF 2549 2361
City and County Museum Accession No: 269.98

A.P.S. Report No: **22/99**

*Archaeological Project Services is an IFA Registered Archaeological
Organisation (No. 21)*

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1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken after the discovery of human remains on land adjacent to West Marsh Road, Spalding, Lincolnshire. The remains were unearthed during the excavation of a pipeline trench.

Romano-British (AD 50-410) settlement has been identified in close proximity to the site. Settlement of this period generally lies below layers of alluvium and is not readily visible at ground level.

The investigations revealed a single northeast-southwest aligned grave from which the human remains were recovered. A refuse pit and an animal burial were also recorded at the site. The human remains were of a female aged between 18 and 25 years old. Apart from scientific dating methods, it is impossible to date the remains. However, the graves position below a buried soil, several nails, possibly from a coffin, and its north-south alignment suggest a Romano-British date for the remains.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Definition of a Watching Brief

An archaeological watching brief is defined as 'a formal programme of observation and investigation, conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons within a specified area or site, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed.' (IFA 1997).

2.2 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Geest Prepared Foods to

undertake an archaeological watching brief during pipeline trenching on land adjacent to West Marsh Road, Spalding, Lincolnshire. The watching brief was carried out after the discovery of human remains within the pipeline trench. These remains were subsequently removed by the police and the Assistant Archaeological Officer, Lincolnshire County Council, instigated a watching brief to record the grave in which the human remains were located and to record any further archaeological features. Lincolnshire County Council commissioned the post-excavation analysis and this report.

2.3 Topography and Geology

Spalding is located 23km southwest of Boston and 30km southeast of Sleaford in the administrative district of South Holland, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The site is located c.1.3km northeast of Spalding town centre as defined by the market place. Situated at a height of approximately 6m OD on land bounded by West Marsh Road to the southeast and West Elloe Avenue to the southwest with the Geest factory to the north and west, the site is centred on National Grid Reference TF 2549 2361.

Local soils have not been mapped but are likely to be of the Wisbech Series, typically coarse silty calcareous alluvial gley soils (Robson 1990, 36). These soils are developed on a drift geology of young marine alluvium. Beneath the drift deposits is a solid geology of Jurassic Oxford Clay (BGS 1992).

2.4 Archaeological Setting

West Marsh Road is situated in an area of archaeological remains dating from the Romano-British period to the present day.

A Romano-British occupation level was found 250m to the southeast (Whitwell 1965, 48; Phillips 1970, 292). This layer, which contained quantities of pottery, was found at a depth of 0.75m below the present ground surface (c. 2m OD). Buried Romano-British remains have also be uncovered during the excavation of the Coronation Channel, where occupation layers were found at heights of between 1.3m and 1.6m OD (Smith 1970, 151).

Spalding is possibly first referred to in the Tribal Hideage of the 7th century wherein a tribe known as the *Spaldas* are recorded. The place name Spalding derives from the Old English *Spaldingas*, 'descendants of *Spaldas*' (Ekwall 1974, 432). To date, little evidence for Saxon occupation within Spalding has been located, although Late Saxon pottery has been found 1km to the east (Cope-Faulkner 1998, 6).

The Domesday Book of 1086 records that Spalding was owned principally by Ivo Taillebois with land also belonging to Crowland Abbey and Guy of Craon (Foster and Longley 1976). The survey also mentions the existence of a market, six fisheries, salt-pans and a wood of alders. Ivo Taillebois is believed to have constructed a castle in the town and early maps indicate this was located 700m southwest of the site.

However, the archaeological remains of the medieval period are restricted to the town centre of Spalding and the investigation site lay outside the 13th century sea bank (BGS 1992).

3. AIMS

The requirements of the watching brief were to record and interpret the archaeological deposits present, and to determine their date, sequence, function and origin so as to place

the human remains within context.

4. METHODS

Trenches had already been opened by a mechanical excavator to a depth of 1.5m as required by the pipeline. During this work human remains were found. Following removal of the human remains by the police, and the instigation of a watching brief, the sides of the trenches were cleaned and rendered vertical. Selected deposits were partially or fully excavated by hand to determine their nature and to retrieve artefactual material. The depth and thickness of each deposit was measured from the ground surface. Each archaeological deposit or feature revealed was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and interpretations appears as Appendix 1. A photographic record was compiled and plans and sections were drawn at a scale of 1: 10. Recording of deposits encountered during the watching brief was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services practice. Phasing was assigned based on artefact dating and the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them.

5. RESULTS

Following specialist descriptions, three phases of activity were identified:

Phase 1	Natural deposits
Phase 2	Undated deposits
Phase 3	Modern deposits

Archaeological contexts are listed below and described. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

Phase 1 Natural deposits

Located at the base of the trench was a deposit of firm light yellowish brown sand and silt (007) overlain by a firm light brown sand and silt, 0.36m thick. These layers were identified as the underlying alluvial deposits of probable marine origin.

Phase 2 Undated deposits

Cut into the natural alluvial deposits was a sub-rectangular feature aligned north-south (009). Measuring approximately 1.5m long and 0.45m deep no width could be ascertained as the remainder of the feature extended beyond the trench confines (Figs. 4 and 5). It was within this cut that the human remains had been located. Two fills were recorded, a lower fill of light brown silt (006) and an upper of mixed brown silt (005). Four nails, possibly from a coffin, were retrieved from one of these fills by the Assistant Archaeological Officer.

Located within 1m of the grave was an animal burial. Unfortunately, the depth of the trench precluded detailed recording. The animal was within a mixed brown silt fill (012) and was probably a dog.

Phase 3 Modern deposits

The grave was sealed by a firm dark greyish brown sand and silt deposit (003), interpreted as a buried soil. This was 0.23m thick.

Situated 2m to the west of the grave was a feature appearing in section only (011). A width of 8m was recorded and a depth of *c.* 0.5m was ascertained. A single deposit of black and dark grey organic silt containing modern debris filled this feature (010), probably a recent refuse pit.

Above the buried soil (003) was a 0.53m

thick deposit of mixed brown silt (002). Containing occasional flecks of charcoal, this deposit also produced a number of shells which might indicate an alluvial origin for the deposit.

Sealing all deposits was a topsoil of brown mottled silt (001), 0.4m thick.

6. DISCUSSION

Natural sands and silts (Phase 1) were the earliest deposits encountered during the watching brief and identified as the underlying marine alluvium.

A grave (Phase 2) represented the earliest archaeological feature identified on the site and was sealed beneath a buried soil. The grave contained the extended inhumation of a female aged between 18 and 25. The body had been placed face-up on a north-south alignment, which is generally typical of pre-Christian Romano-British or pagan Saxon burials. No cause of death could be ascertained from the remains. The presence of nails within the fill of the grave suggests the former presence of a wooden coffin and suggests a Romano-British burial rather than a Saxon grave. Moreover, the presence of a Romano-British settlement to the southeast may support this theory.

Romano-British burials are very rare in the Lincolnshire Fenland and no cemeteries have been identified. Only one burial has been adequately reported upon, that of an elderly female from Guthram Gowt, near Bourne (Herbert 1999, 13).

It is unfortunate that the burial at Spalding was removed prior to archaeological intervention at the site. Although archaeological and forensic methodologies differ, it has been identified previously that more evidence can be retrieved and a greater

level of understanding could have been achieved by those who carry out systematic excavation routinely (Hunter *et al.* 1996, 12).

Phase 3 deposits are connected with recent development of the site.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigations on land adjacent to West Marsh Road were carried out because of the discovery of human remains revealed during the process of trenching for a new pipeline and the possibility existed of further remains being found.

Only the one grave was identified and may be isolated, though the small dimensions of the trench provided only a limited view of the area, with the consequent possibility that other burials may be located nearby.

Although the burial was undated, the orientation of the grave, and its stratigraphic position beneath a buried soil, would suggest it is possibly of Romano-British date. Analysis of the skeletal remains indicates that it was a young adult female inhumation.

No other finds were made during the investigation. Site conditions suggest that few environmental indicators (snails, seeds, pollen *etc.*) will survive other than through charring.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services would like to acknowledge the assistance of Mr Steve Catney and Mr Jim Bonnor who commissioned this report on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council. The fieldwork

was commissioned by Geest Prepared Foods. The work was coordinated by Denise Drury and this report was edited by Tom Lane MIFA. Dave Start permitted examination of the parish files maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Denise Drury
Supervisor: Fiona Walker
Finds Processing: Denise Buckley
Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner
Post-excavation Analyst: Paul Cope-Faulkner

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11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services

BGS British Geological Survey

DoE Department of the Environment

IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

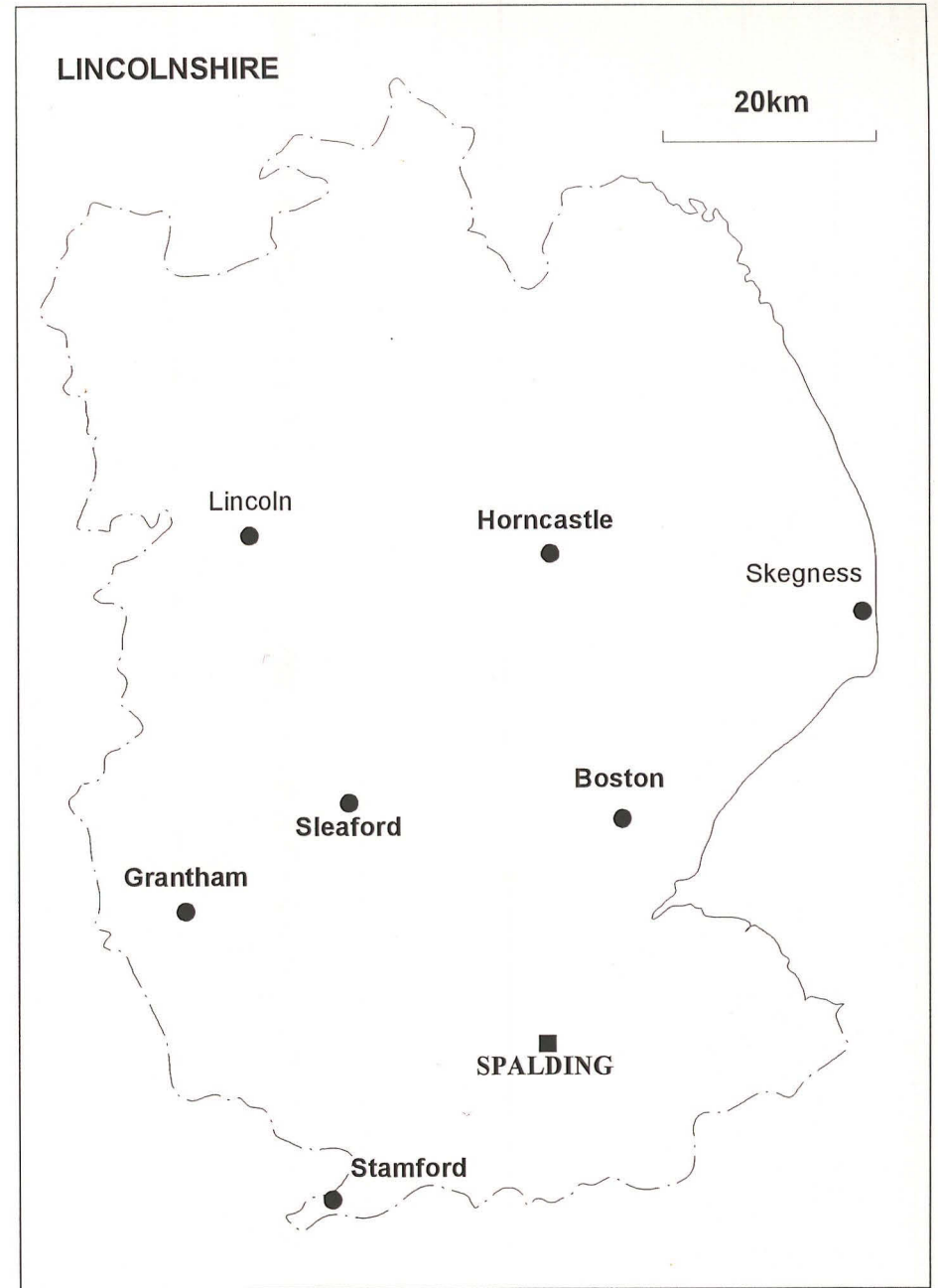
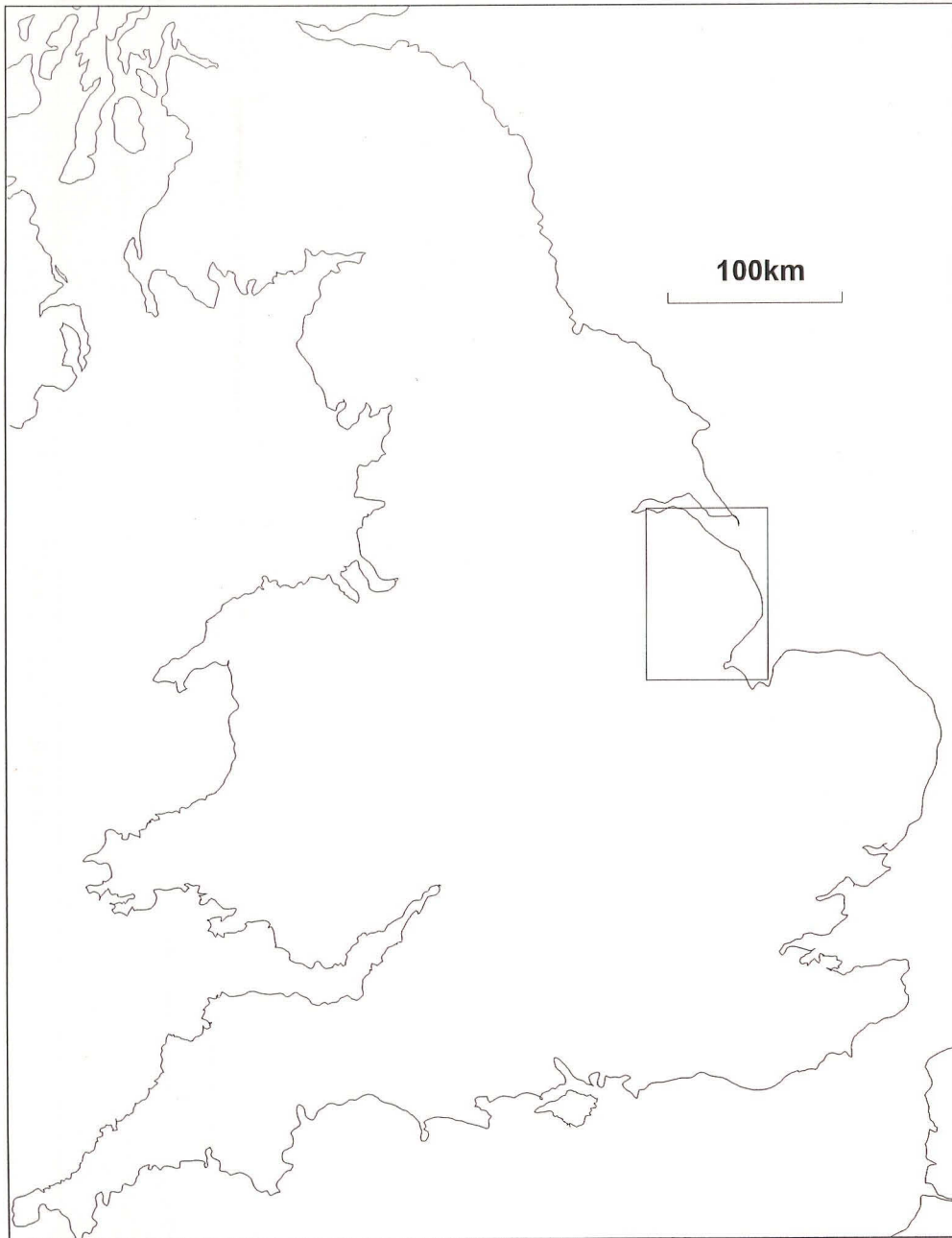
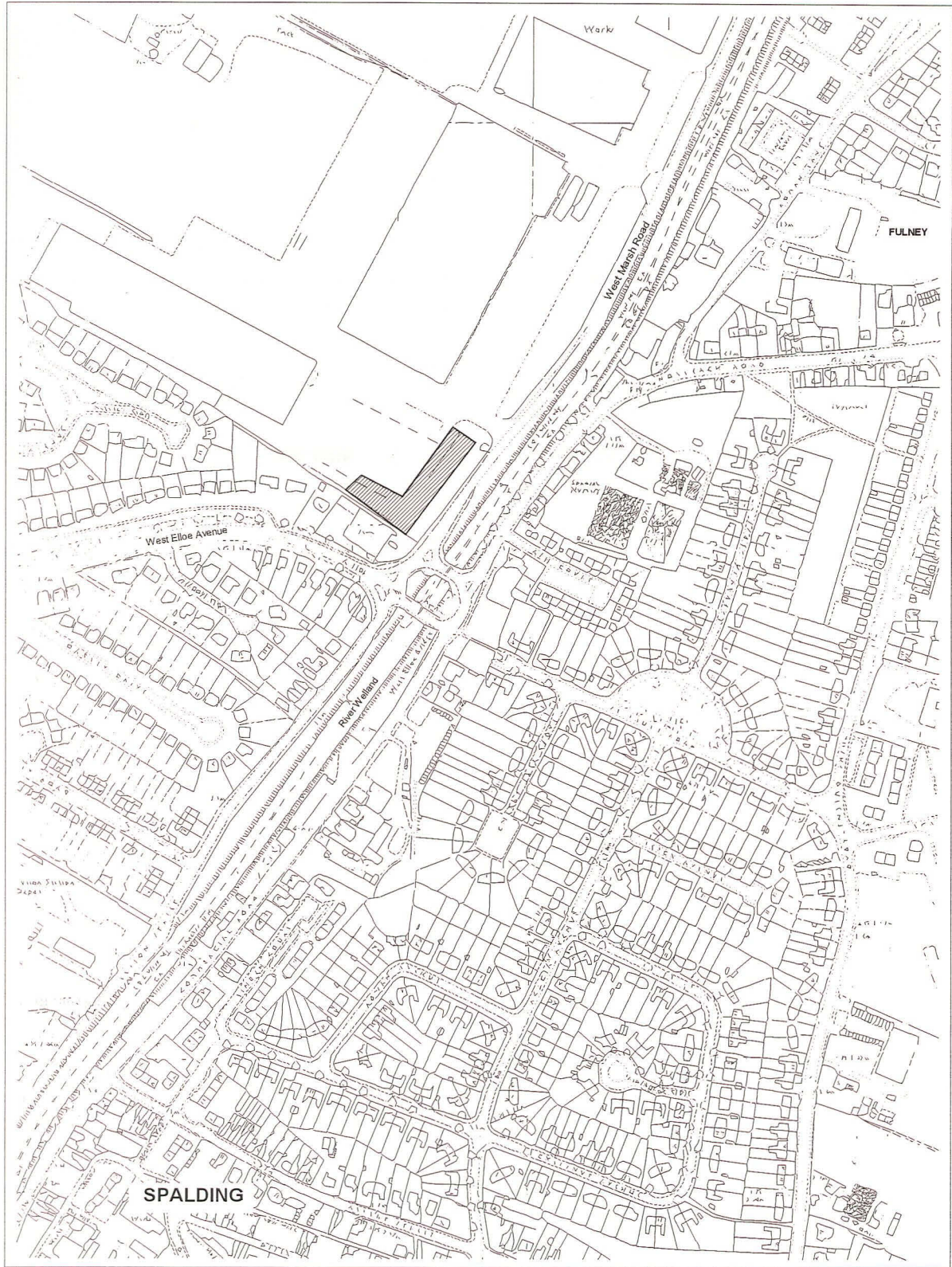


Figure 1 - General Location Plan



0 200m

N



Investigation Area

Figure 2 - Site Location Plan

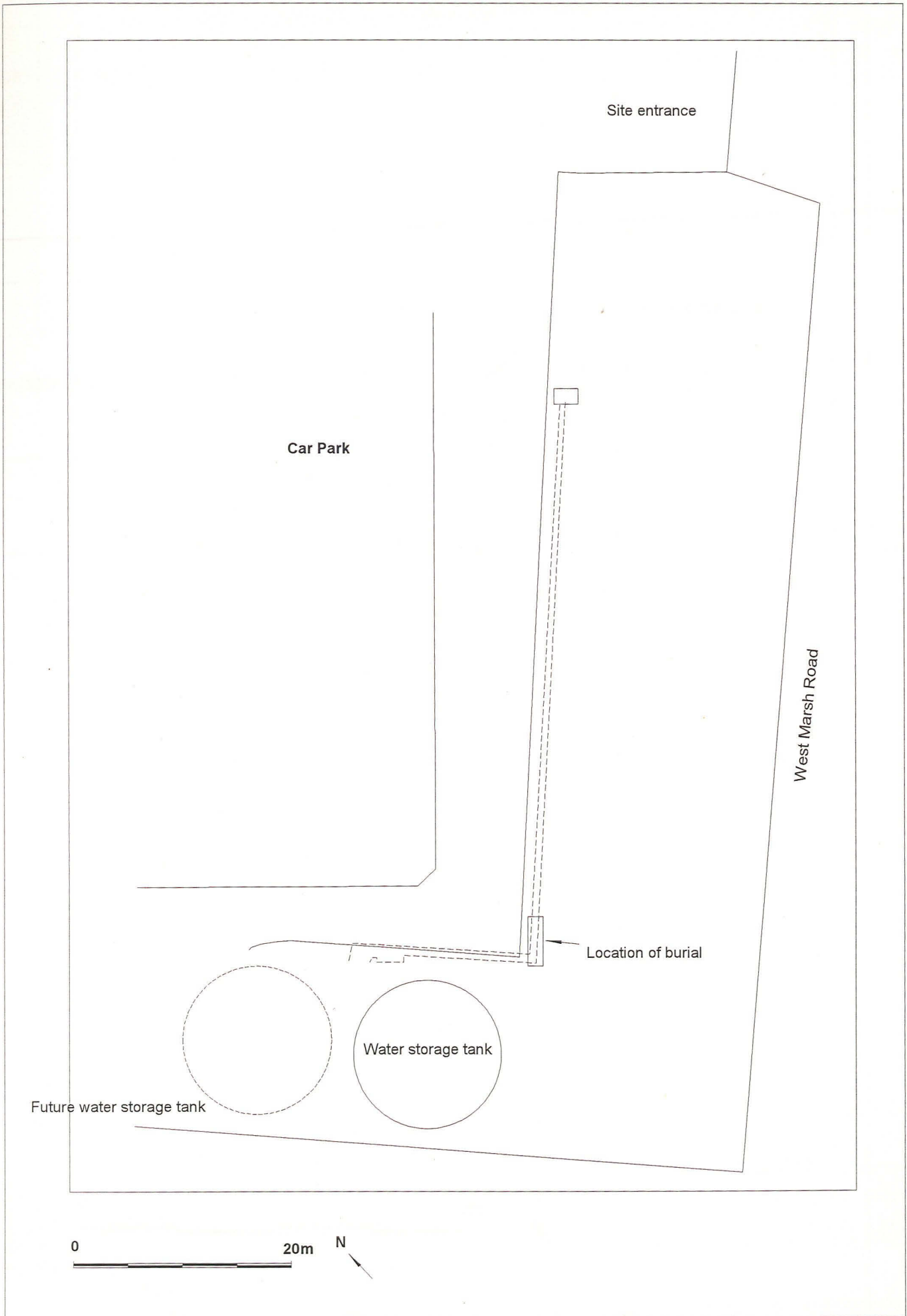


Figure 3 - Plan of development, showing burial location

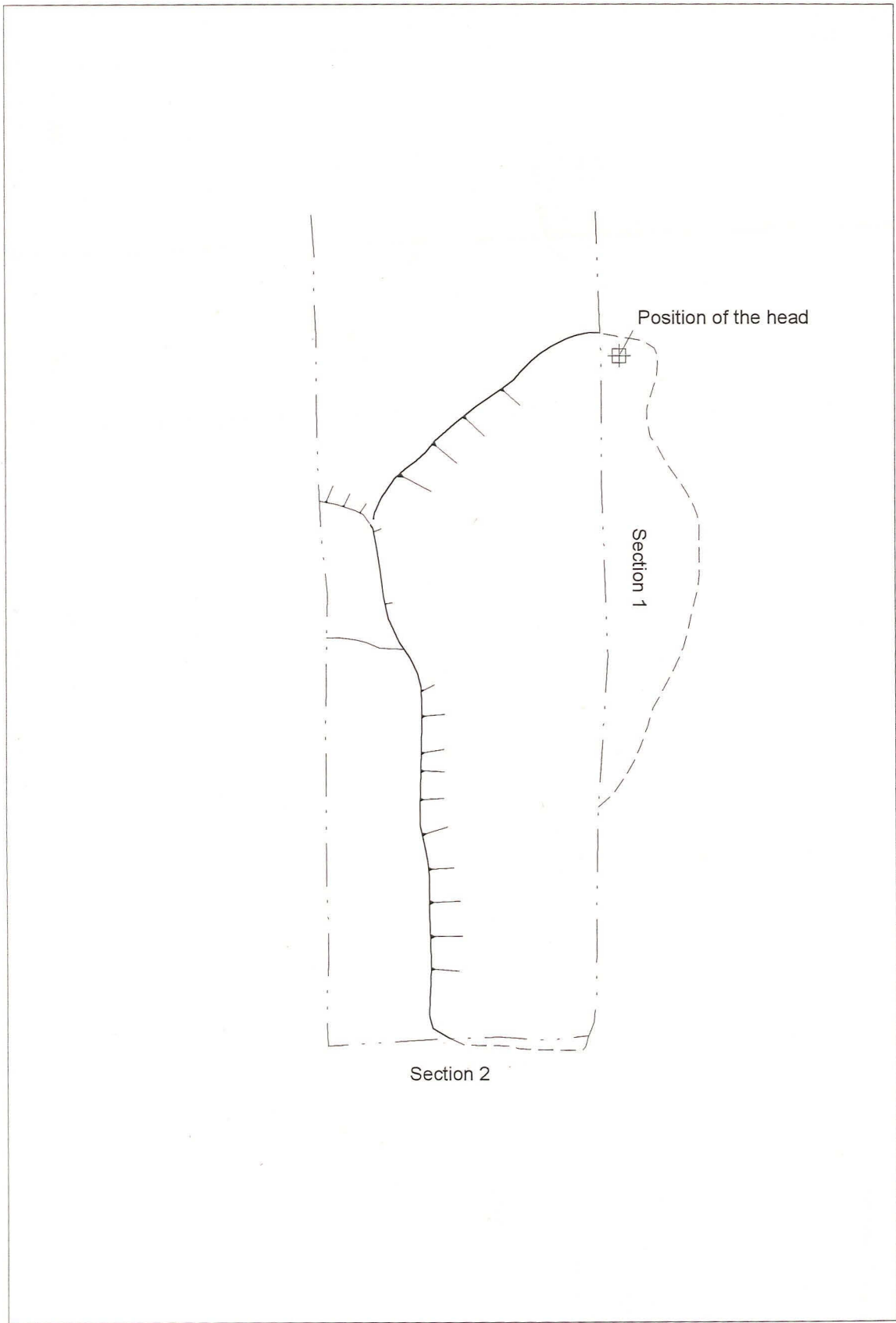


Figure 4 - Plan of grave (009)

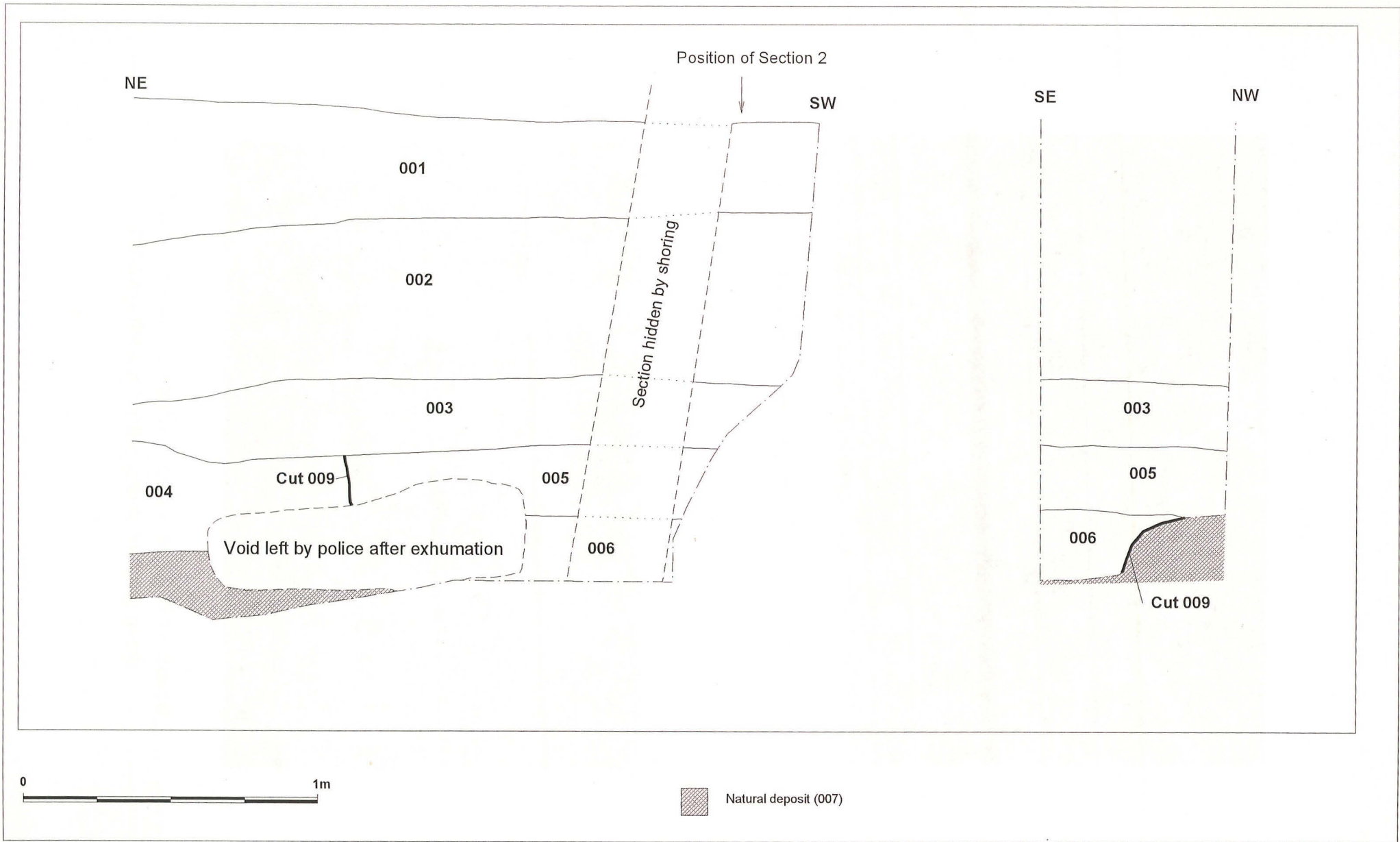


Figure 5 - Sections 1 and 2



Plate 1 - Section 1, showing the sequence of deposits overlying the grave, looking east



Plate 2 - Section 2 and the base of the pipeline trench showing the cut for the grave, looking north

Appendix 1

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Description	Interpretation
001	Firm mid brown mottled silt, 0.4m thick	Topsoil
002	Moderately firm mixed brown silt, 0.53m thick	
003	Firm dark greyish brown fine sand and silt, 0.23m thick	Buried soil
004	Moderately firm light brown sand and silt, 0.36m thick	Alluvium
005	Moderately firm mixed brown silt	Fill of Grave 009
006	Moderately firm light brown silt	Fill of 008
007	Moderately firm light yellowish brown sand and silt	Natural deposit
008	Irregular void, left by police after exhumation	
009	Rectangular cut, 1.56m long by 0.46m deep, aligned north-south, steep sides undulating base	Grave cut
010	Moderately firm black and dark grey silt, with modern debris	Fill of 011
011	Feature, >0.5m wide	Pit
012	Moderately firm mixed brown silt with animal remains	Animal burial

Appendix 2

THE SKELETAL REMAINS By Rebecca Gowland BSc MSc

1. Introduction

The human skeletal remains analysed in this report were excavated from West March Road, Spalding (project code SWM 98) and consist of a single articulated burial of an adult female. It is thought that the skeleton dates to the Romano British period, although the removal of the skeleton from the burial context prior to an archaeological examination means that this date is uncertain. The skeleton was examined in order to discern age, sex, stature, and the presence of any pathological abnormalities. The methodology used in this analysis, together with the results, have been presented in the following sections. A catalogue of the bones present, together with skeletal charts and recording sheets have been included.

2. Methodology

2.1 Sexing

Sex determinations were based upon a variety of diagnostic criteria of the pelvis and skull using methods described in Krogman and Iscan (1986), Bass (1987), and Buikstra and Ubelaker (1994), together with a consideration of metrical data and observations regarding general robusticity. Details of the characteristics observed for each individual have been presented in the appendix.

2.2 Ageing

Adults

When estimating the age at death of adult skeletal material a multifactorial method of age determination is desirable, incorporating as many techniques as possible to arrive at the most reliable age. Skeletal indicators of adult age at death used in this analysis include: examination of late fusing epiphyses (Webb and Suchey, 1985); dental attrition (Miles, 1962); and metamorphosis of the auricular surface of the ilium (Lovejoy *et al.*, 1985).

Recent studies have highlighted the difficulties involved in ageing adult skeletal remains (e.g. Molleson and Cox, 1993) with many methods demonstrating a tendency to underage in later years. In order to attain a more realistic assessment of age, therefore, three broad age categories have been used, as defined in Ubelaker and Buikstra (1994). It is hoped that the use of such categories will also serve to reduce the level of ambiguity and subjectivity arising from inter-observer variability.

Young adult (20-34)

Middle adult (35-49)

Old adult (50+).

2.3 Stature

Stature estimates from the lower limb bones, in particular the femur, tend to provide more accurate results than the upper limbs and have been used preferentially in this analysis. The bones were measured using an osteometric board and stature estimates derived using the formulae developed by Trotter and Gleser (1952).

2.4 Pathology

The individual was examined for evidence of degenerative and infectious diseases, metabolic and endocrine disorders, nutritional deficiency, trauma and neoplastic disease. The dentition was also examined for the presence of pathological lesions or abnormalities.

3. Results

Preservation

Very Good. The individual was greater than 75% complete, with the majority of bones showing little post-mortem fragmentation or chemical weathering.

Position and Orientation

Unknown due to circumstances of excavation.

Sex

Female.

Age

Young adult (20-35 years).

Stature

142.9 cm (based upon measurements of the left femur and tibia).

Pathology

As indicated by the stature measurements (see appendix), the long bones of this individual, particularly those of the forearm, are unusually small, although not small enough that the individual may be classed as a proportionate dwarf. Short proportionate stature may arise for several reasons (e.g. hormone imbalance, chronic infection), however, this individual showed no evidence of infection nor did it exhibit any features characteristic of pituitary dwarfism (e.g. delayed epiphyseal fusion, wide open cranial sutures, enlarged epiphyses) as described by Ortner and Putschar (1981) and Roberts and Manchester (1995). Another unusual aspect of the skeleton are the femora. When held in anatomical position, it is evident that the femoral neck and head is angled towards the anterior to a much greater extent than in normal specimens, and this, together with the large development of the muscular insertion points for the gluteal muscles, indicates that the individual would have walked with an abnormal gait during life.

Further pathology is evident on the right proximal fibula which exhibits a small bony spur, projecting distally from the postero-medial surface of the epiphysis. This ossification of soft tissues is likely to have resulted from trauma of some kind, but is unlikely to have caused the individual much, if any, discomfort during life.

Dental Pathology

Two carious lesions are present, one small (1.5 mm diameter, 1.5 mm depth) cavity located on the distal side of the lower right second premolar, and a much larger one (7 mm diameter) located towards the buccal side of the lower left second molar. The latter cavity has resulted in the destruction of over half of the occlusal surface of the molar and subsequent exposure of the pulp cavity. No abscess appears to have resulted from this exposure of the pulp cavity, although it is possible that a cavity may be contained within the alveolar bone and thus will only be visible radiographically. The upper left third molar has been lost ante-mortem, with only slight remodeling of the alveolar bone, suggesting that the tooth had been lost only for a short period of time before death. The upper right first premolar has rotated medially approximately 90 degrees so that it is at a right angle to the other teeth. Calculus is present only in very slight quantities around both the upper and lower teeth.

Inventory of Bones

Cranial

The frontal bone, both parietals and both temporal bones are present and complete, except for the petrous portion of the left temporal. The occipital bone and most of the sphenoid bone remains. Both the right and left styloid bone are present and intact. Both the lambdoidal and sagittal sutures are fused although the suture lines have not been obliterated. The coronal suture remains unfused.

Dentition

		M		R															
Max.	R	8	7	6	/	4	3	/	1	.	/	/	/	/	5	6	7	X	L
																		
Mand.	R	-	-	-	5	4	3	2	/	.	/	/	3	4	5	6	7	8	L
					C														C

- / = post mortem loss
- X = ante-mortem loss
- C = Carious lesion
- M = Microdontic
- R = Rotation

Post-Cranial

The humerus, radius and ulna of the left arm together with the left clavicle are present and complete. Both the right and left scapulae are missing. All metacarpals of the right and left hands are present except for the first metacarpal of the right hand. The hamate, capitate and trapezoid of the left hand only are present as are 6 proximal and 2 middle phalanges (united). Of the lower limbs, the femur, tibia and fibula, together with the patella from both legs are present and complete. All tarsals and metatarsals of the right foot are present as are three unisided proximal foot phalanges. All tarsals except for the medial and intermediate cuneiform of the left foot and all metatarsals are present. Of the axial skeleton, all vertebrae from the sixth cervical vertebrae down are present, except for the sacrum. The sternum is present as are all twelve left ribs, and a minimum of 3 right ribs. Both the right and left innominate bones are present although the pubic symphyses from both are absent.

Metrical Data

Long Bone	Measurement (Cm)		Stature (Cm)
	R	L	
Humerus	-	25.3	143
Radius	-	16.0	130.77
Ulna	-	18.5	136.76
Femur	36.2	36.2	143.5
Tibia	27.9	28.3	143.6
Fibula	27.6	27.2	139.3

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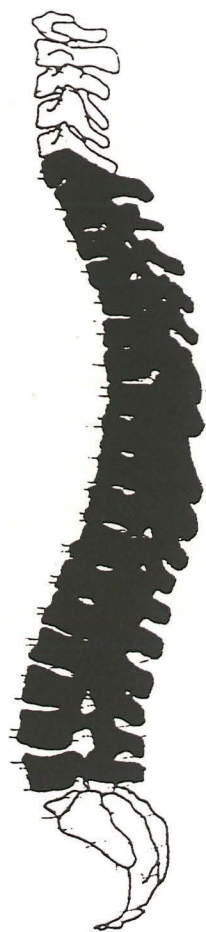
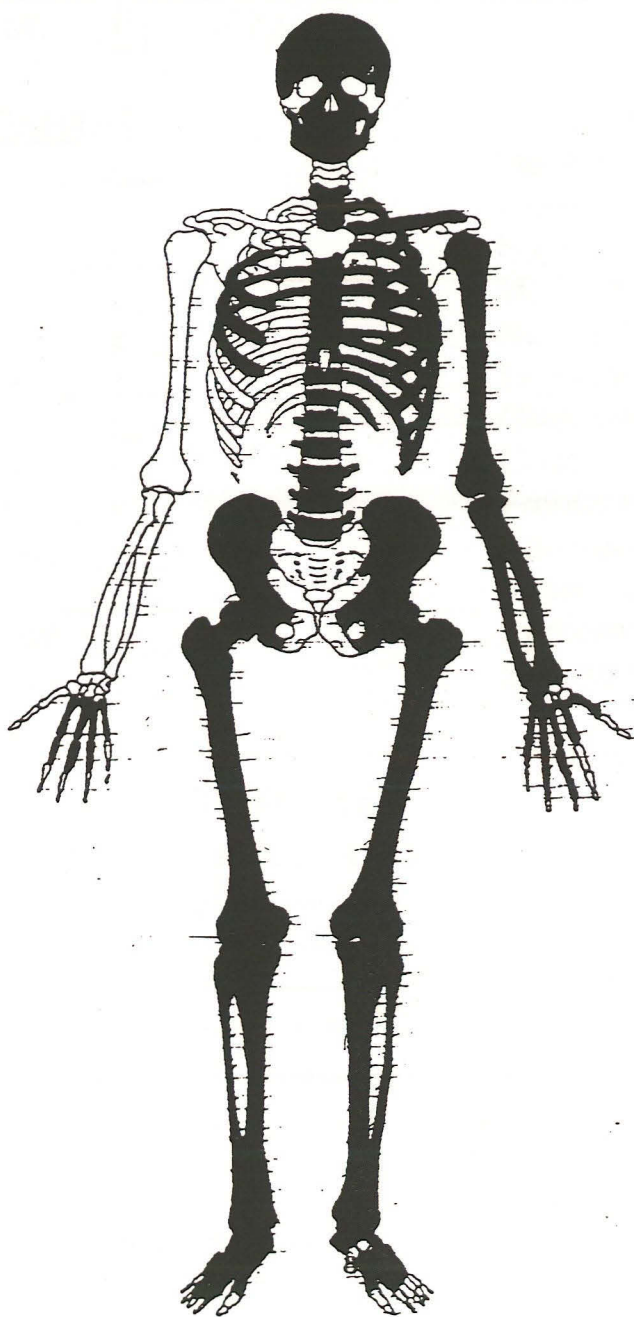
SITE _____

DATE _____

SWM 98

SEXING _____

Morphology _____



SITE: SWM 98 SKELETON NO: None Given

DATE: DEC. 98 OBSERVER: R. Gowland

SEXING: M M? F F? ?

Morphological-

POSTCRANIUM

Sub-pubic angle X
 Sciatic notch F
 Pubic ventral arch X
 Ischial flaring F
 Sacral curvature X
 Pelvic inlet shape X
 Acetabulum F
 Preauricular sulcus F
 Auricular surface F
 Postauricular space F
 Pubic shape X
 Pubic symph. length X
 Obturator foramen F

CRANIUM

Menton F
 Gonion F
 Supraorbital ridges F
 Mastoid process F
 Nuchal crest F
 Supramental crest F
 Glabellar profile F
 Orbital outline F
 Frontal bossing F?
 Parietal bossing F?
 Temporal ridges F
 Zygomatic process F
 Suprameatal crest F

Metric Measurements (in mm)-

	Right	Left	Male	Female	
Femur: Vertical Head Length	<u>42.1</u>	<u>41.5</u>	> 48.0	< 43.0	<u>F</u>
Bicondylar Breadth	<u>64.4</u>	<u>65.2</u>	> 76.0	< 74.0	<u>F</u>
Humerus: Vertical Head Length	<u>X</u>	<u>38.2</u>	> 47.0	< 43.0	<u>F</u>
Radius: max. head diameter	<u>X</u>	<u>Abr.</u>	> 24.0	< 21.0	<u>X</u>
trans. diam. distal end	<u>X</u>	<u>30.0</u>	> 36.0	< 33.0	<u>F</u>

AGEING:

Dental eruption M3 erupted, > 18-22 years

Dental attrition (Miles) M1 18-20 M2 18-20 M3 18-20 mean 18-20 years

Pubic symphysis (Suchey-Brooks) I II III IV V VI

Auricular surface 20-24

Sutural closure Not all sutures complete

Epiphyseal union >21-25 years (late fusing epiphyses)

Summary Age Range 18-25 (young adult)

Appendix 3

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

12	Context records
3	Scale drawings
1	Photographic record sheet
1	Box of finds
1	Stratigraphic matrix

All primary records and finds are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services
The Old School
Cameron Street
Heckington
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 9RW

The ultimate destination of the project archive is:

Lincolnshire City and County Museum
12 Friars Lane
Lincoln
LN2 1HQ

The archive will be deposited in accordance with the document titled *Conditions for the Acceptance of Project Archives*, produced by the Lincolnshire City and County Museum.

Lincolnshire City and County Council Museum Accession Number: 269.98

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: SWM98

The discussion and comments provided in this report are based on the archaeology revealed during the site investigations. Other archaeological finds and features may exist on the development site but away from the areas exposed during the course of this fieldwork. *Archaeological Project Services* cannot confirm that those areas unexposed are free from archaeology nor that any archaeology present there is of a similar character to that revealed during the current investigation.

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Appendix 4

GLOSSARY

Context	An archaeological context represents a distinct archaeological event or process. For example, the action of digging a pit creates a context (the cut) as does the process of its subsequent backfill (the fill). Each context encountered during an archaeological investigation is allocated a unique number by the archaeologist and a record sheet detailing the description and interpretation of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, <i>e.g.</i> (004).
Layer	A layer is a term used to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
Medieval	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
Natural	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity.
Post-medieval	The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.
Romano-British	Pertaining to the period from AD 43-410 when Britain formed part of the Roman Empire.