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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
AT ST. PETER'S CHURCH,
AUBURN,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(ASP98)**



A P S
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES



Lincolnshire County Council
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
AT ST. PETER'S CHURCH,
AUBURN,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(ASP98)**

Work Undertaken For
Mack and Brown Chartered Architects

March 1999

Report Compiled by
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National Grid Reference: SK 9276 6279
City and County Museum Accession No: 81.98

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*Archaeological Project Services is an IFA Registered Archaeological
Organisation (Number 21)*

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1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during drainage works at St. Peter's Church, Aubourn, Lincolnshire.

St. Peter's Church dates from the 13th century and is a listed building.

Trenches did not exceed 0.3m depth and as a result only topsoil and subsoil deposits were encountered. A localised quantity of building material in the subsoil may relate to documented demolition or rebuilding of the church. No artefactual material was found during the investigation.

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, 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 Mack and Brown Chartered Architects to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of drainage channels at St. Peter's Church, Aubourn, Lincolnshire. The watching brief was undertaken on the 23rd September 1998.

2.3 Topography and Geology

Aubourn is situated 10km southwest of Lincoln and approximately 26km north of Grantham, in North Kesteven District,

Lincolnshire (Fig.1).

St. Peter's Church is situated at the village centre at National Grid Reference SK 9276 6279 at a height of c. 10m OD (Fig. 2). The drainage works are concentrated on the eastern end of the church.

Local soils are the Isleham 2 Association typical sandy and peaty soils (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 231). Beneath the soils is a solid geology of Lower Lias clays, shales and limestone (BGS 1973), although outcrops of river terrace sand and gravels are known from the vicinity.

2.4 Archaeological Setting

St. Peter's Church is located in an area of archaeological remains dating from the medieval period to the present day. Aubourn is first mentioned in the Domesday book of 1086 and had a church, a mill and a fishery (Foster and Longley 1976). The place-name Aubourn is derived from the Old English '*alr-burna*' meaning alder stream (Ekwall 1974).

Aubourn was initially owned by Robert de Toden, but by the 12th century the land had passed on to the de Coleville family of Castle Bytham (Wilson 1991). The de Coleville family died out in 1369 and the land was divided between the Mere family, the Convent of Belvoir and the smallest portion passed to the Knights Templar.

St. Peter's Church was built in the 13th century with additions in the 14th and 19th centuries (Pevsner and Harris 1989, 109). Only the chancel remains although the outline of the church is still visible in the churchyard. St. Peter's Church is a listed building (Grade II*).

3. AIMS

The aims of the watching brief were to locate and record archaeological deposits, if present, and to determine their date, function and origin.

4. METHODS

Trenches were excavated to a depth of 0.3m. Following excavation, the sides of selected portions of the trench 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 revealed within the trench was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A photographic record was compiled and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10. Recording of deposits encountered was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services practice.

Records of the deposits were examined and a stratigraphic matrix compiled. A list of all contexts and descriptions appears as Appendix 1. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them.

5. RESULTS

A single phase was identified.

Phase 1 Modern deposits

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

Phase 1 Modern deposits

Located at the base of all trenches was a subsoil of dark brown silt with limestone fragments (002). A thickness of 0.16m was recorded (Fig. 4). Approximately 4m east of the church this subsoil contained lenses of building debris (plaster, stone, brick *etc.*).

Overlying the subsoil was a layer of dark blackish brown silt (001), identified as the present topsoil.

6. DISCUSSION

Only subsoil and topsoil layers were identified during the watching brief. An area of subsoil containing lenses of building debris may relate to either the demolition of the main body of the church or remodelling of the chancel in 1869 (DoE 1983, 3).

The depths of the new drainage trenches were insufficient to identify any archaeological features buried at depth or to impact on burials within the graveyard. No artefacts were retrieved during the investigation.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigations on drainage works at St. Peter's Church, Aubourn were carried out due to the proximity to the 13th century church. However, only modern deposits were affected by the works which did not exceed 0.3m depth. No artefacts were recovered and the local site conditions would suggest that few environmental indicators (seeds, wood, shells, *etc.*) would survive other than through charring.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wish to acknowledge the assistance of Mr David Brown, of Mack and Brown Chartered Architects for commissioning the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. Gary Taylor coordinated this project and this report was edited by Tom Lane MIFA. Hilary Healey commented on the earthwork features in Aubourn. Kate Orr, the North Kesteven District Heritage Officer, provided information from the relevant parish files maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

Pevsner, N. and Harris, J., 1989 *Lincolnshire, The Buildings of England* (2nd ed, revised Antram, N.)

Wilson, J.W., 1991 *Aubourn Glimpses*

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Gary Taylor
Supervisor: Fiona Walker
Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner
Post-excavation Analyst: Paul Cope-Faulkner

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Ekwall, E., 1974 *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-names* (4th ed)

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Hodge, C.A.H., Burton, R.G.O., Corbett, W.M., Evans, R. and Seale, R.S., 1984 *Soils and their Use in Eastern England, Soil Survey of England and Wales Bulletin No. 13* (Harpenden)

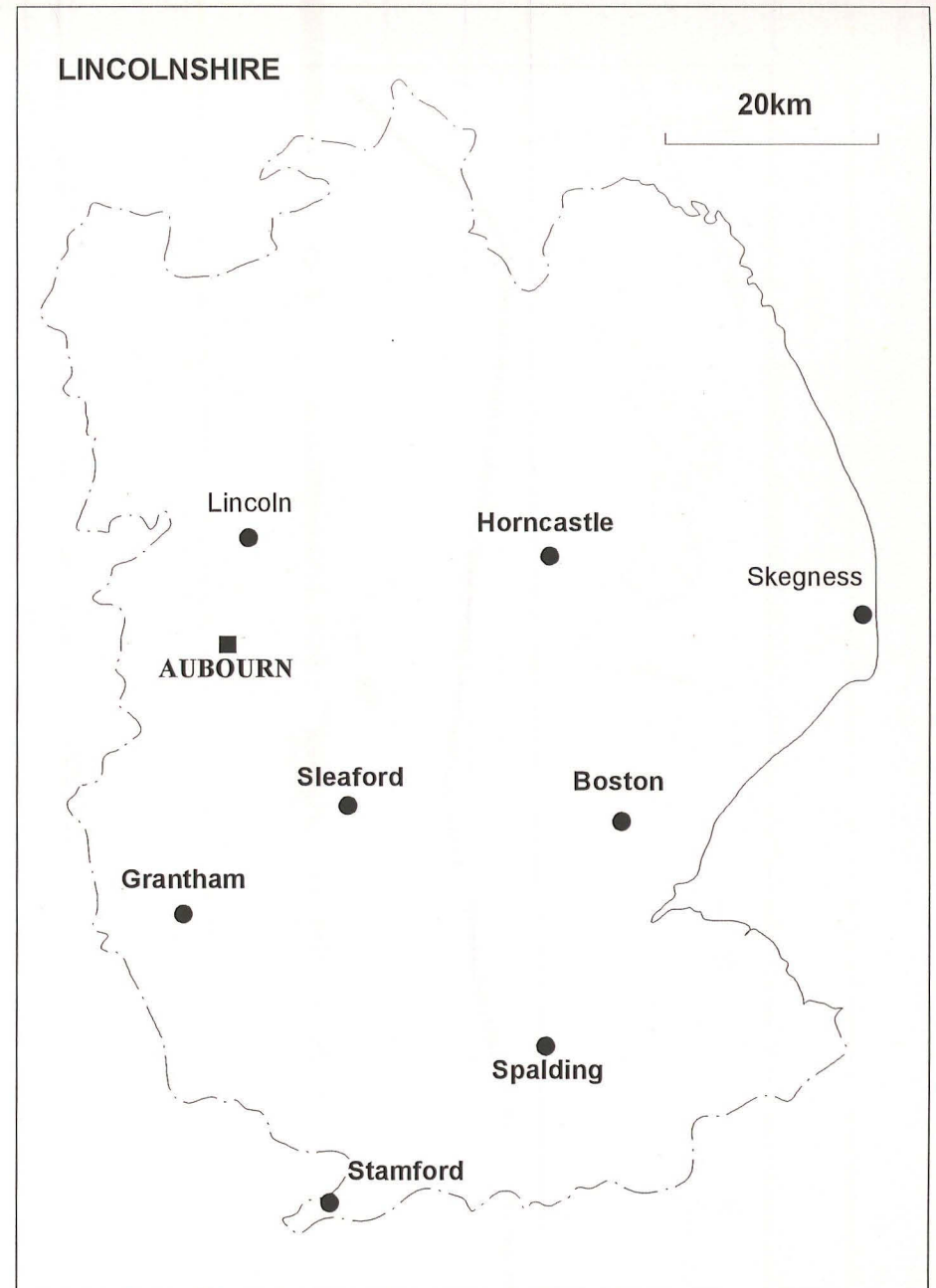
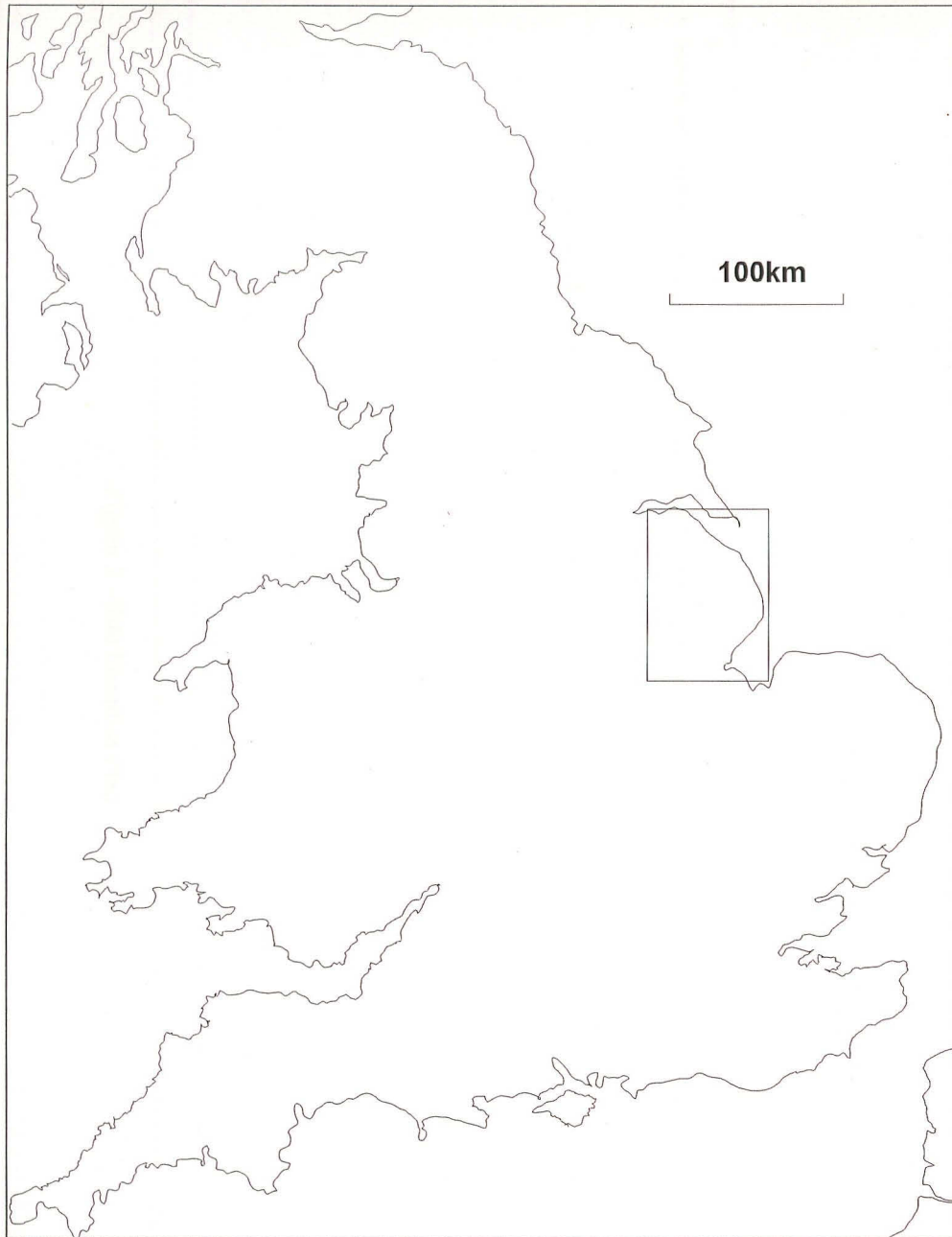
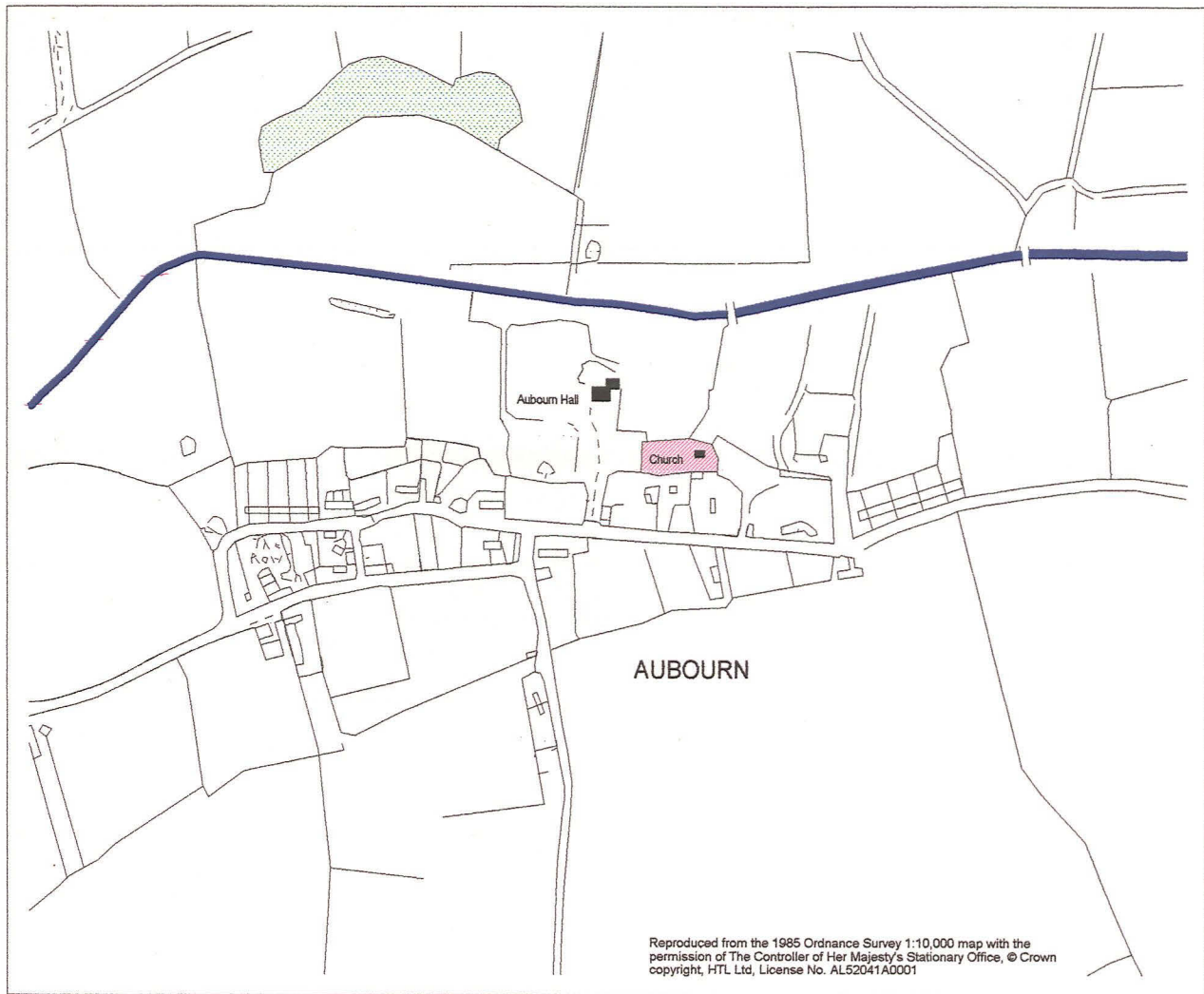


Figure 1 - General Location Plan



 Investigation Area

Figure 2 - Site Location Plan

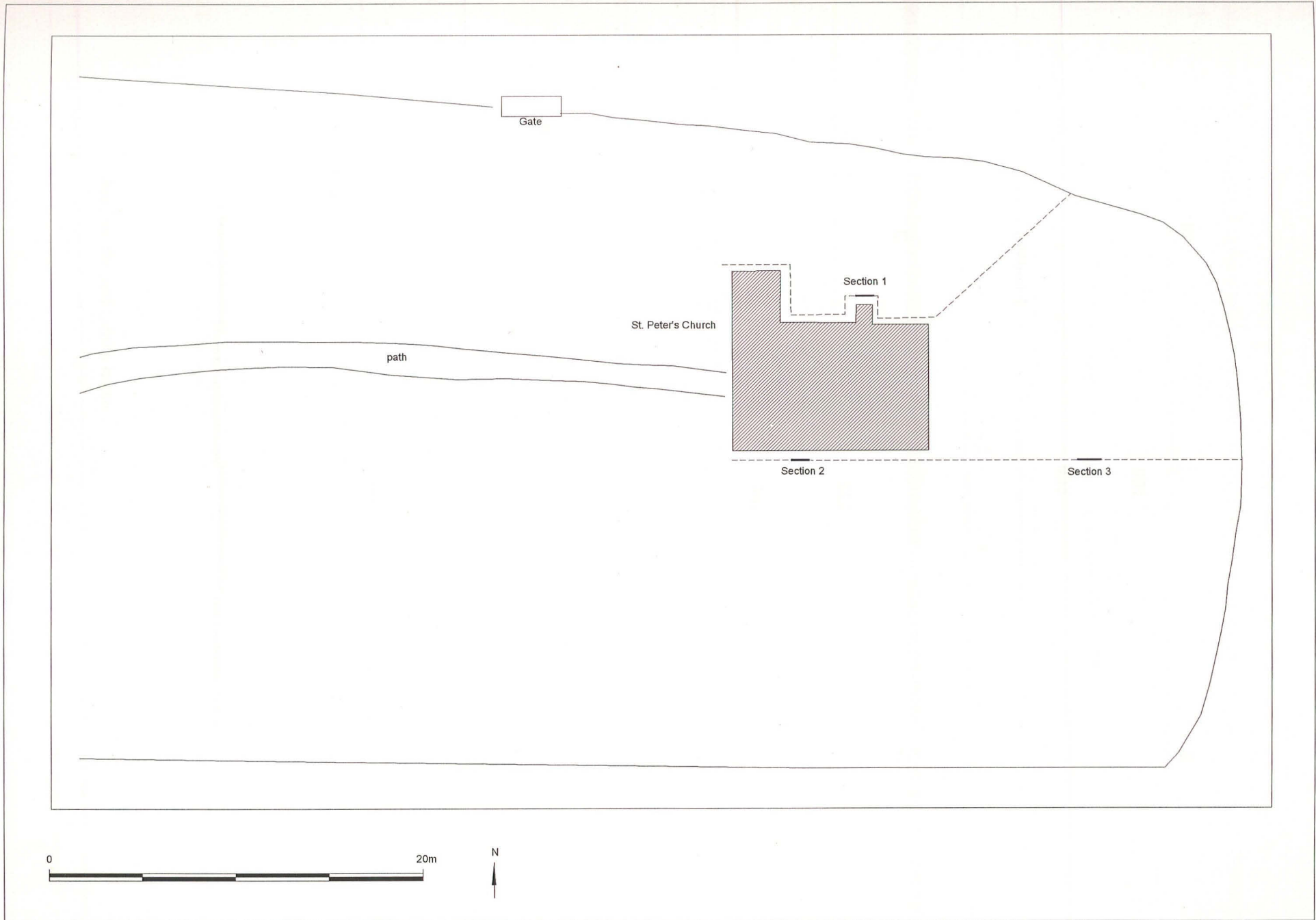


Figure 3 - Plan of drainage works, showing location of drawn sections

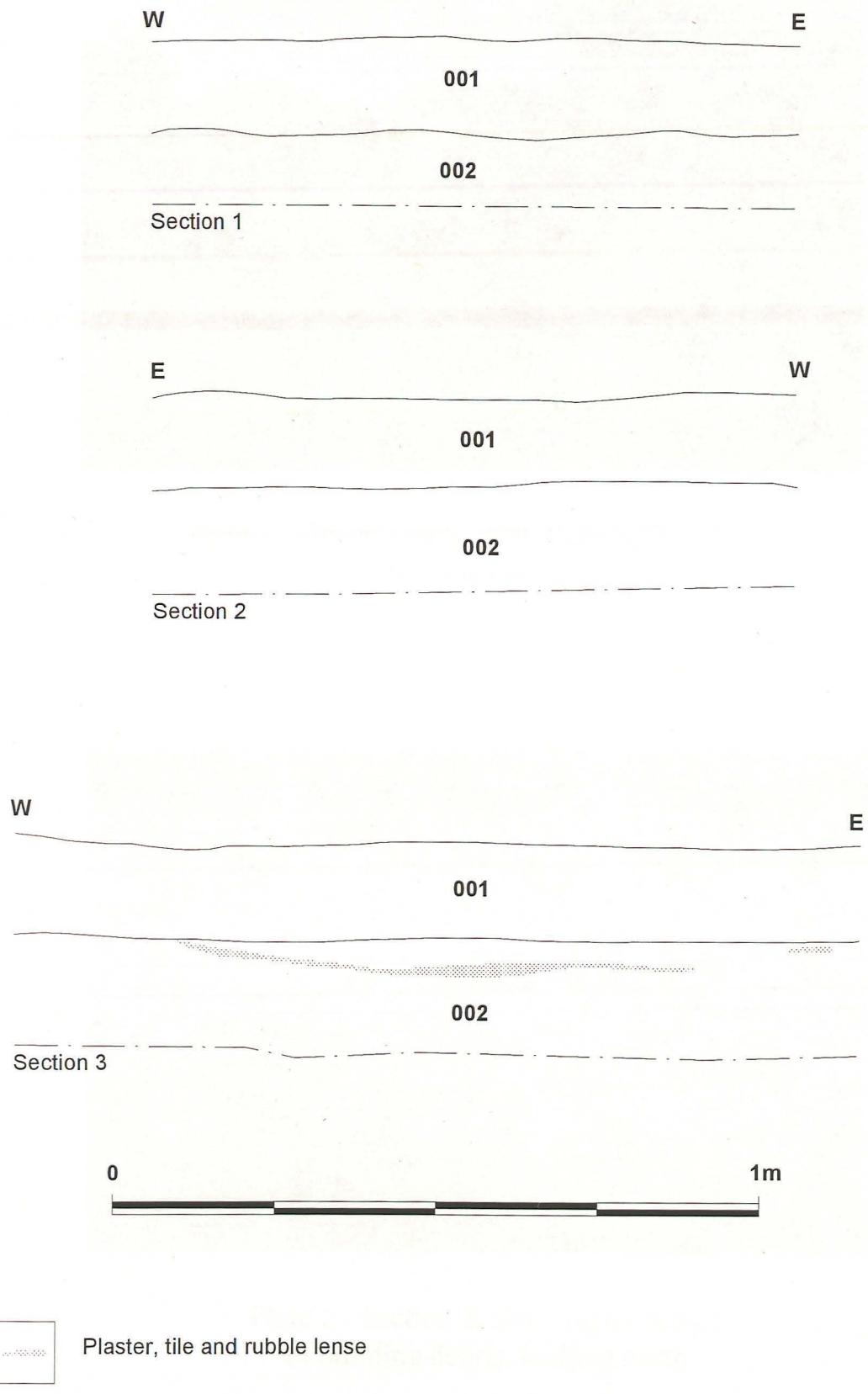


Figure 4 - Sections 1, 2 and 3



Plate 1 - General view of St. Peter's Church,
looking east



Plate 2 - Section 3, showing the lenses
of building debris, looking north

Appendix 1

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Description	Interpretation
001	Friable dark blackish brown silt, with sand and occasional limestone fragments, 0.14m thick	Topsoil
002	Moderately firm dark brown silt and limestone fragments, 0.16m thick. East of the church are lenses of plaster, stone and brick/tile	Subsoil

Appendix 2

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

2	Context records
1	Scale drawings
1	Photographic record sheet
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: 81.98

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: ASP98

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 3

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 interpretations 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).
Cut	A cut refers to the physical action of digging a posthole, pit, ditch, foundation trench, <i>etc.</i> Once the fills of these features are removed during an archaeological investigation the original 'cut' is therefore exposed and subsequently recorded.
Fill	Once a feature has been dug it begins to silt up (either slowly or rapidly) or it can be back-filled manually. The soil(s) which become contained by the 'cut' are referred to as its fill(s).
Layer	A layer is a term 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 dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.
Saxon	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 410-1066 when England was largely settled by tribes from northern Germany