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**DESK-TOP ASSESSMENT OF THE  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF  
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF LAND  
AT SPOUT YARD,  
LOUTH,  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
(LSY99)**

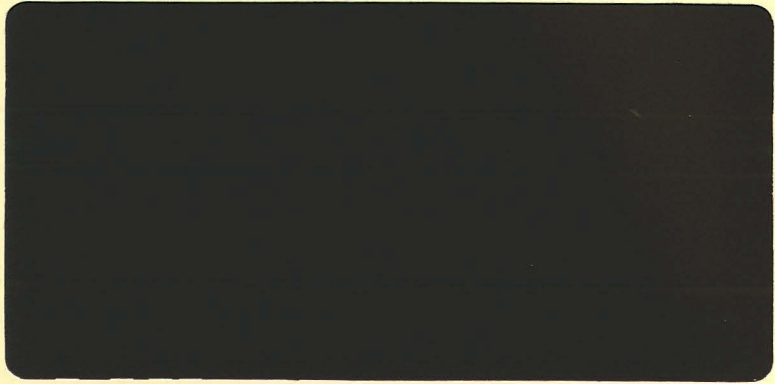


**A P S**  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
PROJECT  
SERVICES



Lincolnshire County Council  
Archaeology Section

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AT SPOUT YARD,  
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(LSY99)**

Work Undertaken For  
East Lindsey District Council

March 1999

Report compiled by  
Paul Cope-Faulkner BA (Hons) AIFA

National Grid Reference: TF 3272 8755

A.P.S. Report No: 34/99



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## 1. SUMMARY

*A desk-top assessment was undertaken to determine the archaeological implications of proposed development on land adjacent to Spout Yard, Louth, Lincolnshire.*

*There is no clear evidence of prehistoric or Romano-British remains in Louth. Although Louth is mentioned as early as the 7<sup>th</sup> century, and had a monastery by the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, there is no physical evidence of human activity in the town until the Late Saxon period (9<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> centuries).*

*Louth was an important medieval town, though the 15<sup>th</sup> century parish church is the only extant structure of the period in the vicinity of the site. However, Chequergate appears to be part of the medieval street pattern of the town and is referred to as early as the 16<sup>th</sup> century.*

*Buildings were located in the area at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and a tannery occupied the site at the end of the century. The proximity of the river, and documented flooding of the area, indicates the possibility of waterlogged ancient environmental remains surviving at the site.*

*Ground conditions are generally non-conducive to geophysical survey other than by ground probing radar.*

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Definition of a Desk-based assessment

*A desk-top assessment is defined as 'assessments of the known or potential archaeological resource within a specified area or site on land... They consist of a collation of existing written, graphic, photographic and electronic information in*

*order to identify the likely character, extent, quality and worth of the known or potential archaeological resource in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate' (IFA 1997).*

### 2.2 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by East Lindsey District Council to undertake a desk-top assessment of land adjacent to Spout Yard, Louth, Lincolnshire. This was in order to determine the archaeological implications of proposed development of the site.

### 2.2 Topography and Geology

Louth is situated 19km north of Horncastle and 34km northwest of Skegness in East Lindsey District, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The proposed development site is located 160m northeast of the town centre as defined by the parish church of St. James. Situated at a height of c. 25m OD on land bounded by the Chequergate to the south, Broadbanks to the east and the River Lud to the north (National Grid Reference TF 3272 8755), the proposed development site is approximately 50m by 80m in extent. The site is located in the floodplain of the River Lud and drops gently down towards the river.

As an urban area, the soils have not been mapped. However, local soils are likely to be of the Holderness Association, typically slowly permeable fine loamy soils (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 214). These soils overlie a drift geology of boulder clay above a solid geology of Cretaceous Chalk (BGS 1980).

## 3. AIMS

The aims of the desk-top assessment were to



locate and, if present, appraise known archaeological sites in the vicinity and to determine the archaeological potential of the proposed development area. This would permit the Archaeology Officer, Lincolnshire County Council, to formulate appropriate policies for the management of the archaeological resource present on the site.

#### 4. METHODS

Compilation of the archaeological and historical data relevant to the area of the proposed development site involved examination of all appropriate primary and secondary sources available. These include:

- historical documents, held in Lincolnshire Archives
- enclosure, tithe, parish and other maps and plans, held in Lincolnshire Archives
- recent and old Ordnance Survey maps
- the County Sites and Monuments Record
- the parish files maintained by The Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire
- archaeological books and journals
- place-name evidence

Information obtained from the literature and cartographic examination was supplemented by a walk-over survey of the proposed development site. This walk-over survey investigated the present land-use and condition; the extent of hardstanding and other firm surfaces; the presence, or otherwise, of dumped materials; and the appropriateness for geophysical survey.

Results of the archival and field examinations were committed to scale plans of the area.

## 5. RESULTS

### 5.1 Historical Data

Louth is first referred to in AD 675. The place-name is taken from the River Lud which is derived from the Old English *Hlûde* meaning 'the loud one' (Ekwall 1974, 305). The first account of the town was in a charter to Peterborough Abbey by King Æthelred giving the abbey the town and other places in Lincolnshire and Leicestershire (Swanton 1997, 37). This was later confirmed by a second charter by Pope Agatho (Hart 1966, 99). A similar charter giving Louth to Peterborough Abbey by Wulfhere, king of the Mercians, dates from AD 664, but is believed to be a later fabrication (*ibid.* 97).

The next mention of Louth is in AD 790 when Abbot Æthelheard of *Hlundensis monasterium* (the monastery of Louth) was chosen as the Archbishop of Canterbury (Swanton 1997, 54).

Dating from *c.* AD 1072, a narrative of the abbey of Thorney in Cambridgeshire tells how around AD 973 Æthelwold, bishop of Winchester, wishing to endow the abbey with relics, heard of 'the blessed Herefrid bishop of Lincoln resting in Louth chief town' and decided to steal the remains for the new foundation (Owen 1997, 60).

At the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086, Louth is recorded as owned by the Bishop of Lincoln. The town contained 80 burgesses (merchants and property owners) and 2 knights with a market, 21 acres of meadow, 400 acres of woodland and 14 mills (Foster and Longley 1976).

Louth was a relatively prosperous town with possibly 124 tenants in the parish at the time of the Domesday Survey increasing to 268 tenants by 1259 and 680 people contributing



to the poll tax in 1377 (Platts 1985, 200).

Chequergate is first referred to in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The place-name element *Chequer* may be derived from the Middle English *Cheker* given as a name to land with a chequered appearance (Smith 1956, 92). Chequergate was formerly a longer street than it is at present and included Bridge Street as evidenced by the description of a property in 1835 (Goulding 1891, 83).

The town of Louth had a schoolmaster as early as 1276 and by the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Gilds in the town were contributing 40 shillings for the maintenance of the master (Hodgett 1975, 142). In 1556-7 John Bradby gave a tenement of land in *Cheker* to the Grammar School (Goulding 1918, 41). A petty school is recorded in Chequergate in 1564 (Robinson 1992, 62).

Also in 1564, the bailiff acknowledged the receipt of 2 shillings, being the rent of a tenement in the *Cheker* over against John Fisher's house (Goulding 1891, 124). In 1603, Richard Smithson and Samuel ffisher were fined 6 pence for having placed dung in '*the King's highway near the checker*' (*ibid.* 83).

The parish of Louth was enclosed in 1805. Although the site is not specifically mentioned a plot of land called the Glebe Homestead which was '*bounded north by the River Ludd, and lands and buildings of Jeremiah Healey respectively east by the same lands and gardens of Godfrey Outram respectively south by one of the same gardens and a street called Chequer Gate*' (LAO Louth Parish Award).

A tannery was established on the proposed development area, possibly by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century as recorded in a directory (White 1856, 266). No tannery is recorded on this site prior to this date, although a tanner is

mentioned in 1374 (Swaby 1951, 86). This tannery was possibly short lived as no mention is made of a tannery in 1922 (Kelly).

In 1920 Louth was affected by a severe flood in which 23 inhabitants lost their lives (Robinson 1992, 123). The effect the flood had on the proposed development area is not known although a published photograph partly shows the development site, where a collapsed building is located adjacent to the river with further wreckage beyond (Robinson 1995, 26). The site was referred to as Stor's Tanyard.

## 5.2 Cartographic Data

The area under investigation is located to the north of the centre of the town of Louth. Appropriate maps of the vicinity were examined.

Armstrong's '*Map of Lincolnshire*', dating from 1788 includes a detailed plan of Louth (Fig. 4). Chequergate is shown (*Chequer Street*) and is depicted with buildings fronting the street to the north and south sides of the thoroughfare. Behind these buildings, several property boundaries are shown and the proposed development area appears to be the largest of them.

The 1805 Inclosure Award shows the development area as a small cluster of buildings around an open yard (LAO Louth Parish Award). Entry to this yard appears to be along what is now in part Spout Yard.

Dating from 1808, Espin's '*Plan of Louth*' shows several buildings within the area of proposed development (Fig. 5). Spout Yard is not depicted, although the route is part shown by a watercourse running south and then east from the River Lud and rejoining the river west of Eve Street. No apparent entrance is shown on the plan to the



proposed development area.

Bayley's map of Louth, dating to 1834, indicates very little change from Espin's plan with the exception of development on the outskirts of the town (Robinson 1992, 29). It is probable that this later map copied much of Espin's plan. In the subsequent year a plan of Louth, based on the Ordnance Survey map was produced. Although showing buildings on the site, the scale of the plan is insufficient for detailed examination.

The first edition 6" Ordnance Survey Plan of 1890 (Sheet XLVIII.SW) shows a similar arrangement of buildings on the site to that shown in the earlier plans. Spout Yard appears as a thoroughfare and still remains the principal access to the proposed development site (Fig. 6). A new road has been inserted from Chequergate to the river. The subsequent 1906 25" Ordnance Survey Plan is the first plan to show individual buildings (Fig. 7). The proposed development area is labelled as a tannery and an associated tank is depicted in the northeast corner of the site. A passage appears to have been inserted on the southwest of the site (currently the present access), although a main entrance appears still to be located along Spout Yard. The road between Chequergate and the river is named as Ludgate and appears on Ordnance Survey plans dating to 1957, before the telephone exchange was constructed.

### 5.3 Aerial Photograph Data

As the area under investigation is within the urban core of Louth, a comprehensive search of aerial photographs of the site was not undertaken. However, a number of published photographs were examined. The earliest photograph is dated to 1948 and is published in Owen (1997). This shows the layout of buildings with little difference to

the present appearance of the site. A similar picture published in *Lincolnshire Life* (March 1973) is of too poor a quality to determine the presence of historic buildings or archaeological remains.

An aerial view of Louth dating from *c.* 1930 partly shows the site as open ground with a warehouse adjoining Spout Yard (Robinson 1992, endpaper). In the centre of the site is a hipped roof building adjoining another warehouse type structure. Four cottages are also shown which have since been removed.

A recent photograph is published in Start (1993) and shows the development site as a depot for refuse lorries. The files of the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire hold several photographs, one of which is reproduced as Plate 1. No archaeological features are apparent on any of these photographs.

### 5.4 Archaeological Data

Records of archaeological sites and finds are held in the Lincolnshire County Sites and Monuments Record. Other, secondary, sources were also examined. Details of archaeological and historical remains falling within the investigation area are collated in Table 1 and committed to Fig. 8.

Map Code No.	Sites and Monuments Record No.	Description	National Grid Reference
1	43403	Medieval skeletons	TF 3265 8735
2	41404	Medieval church of St. James's	TF 3263 8737
3	41405	Medieval church, precursor to St. James's	TF 3263 8737
4	43404	Post-medieval wall	TF 3265 8735
5		Post-medieval finds	TF 3280 8738
6		Post-medieval building (Mason's Arms)	TF 3277 8736

Table 1: Archaeological Sites in the Vicinity

### *Prehistoric Archaeology*

Prehistoric remains have, so far, not been identified within the area under investigation.

### *Romano-British Archaeology*

Romano-British (AD 50-410) archaeology is absent within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development area. It has been suggested that Louth was a Romano-British town and that the line of Broadbank preserved a Roman trackway (Owen 1997, 63). However, the paucity of Romano-British finds cast great doubt on this suggestion.

### *Medieval Archaeology*

No Saxon finds are known from the investigation area, despite the early historical references to the town. However, two 9<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> century pottery sherds were recovered during archaeological investigation 180m southwest of the proposed development (Tann 1996, 1).

Medieval sites in the investigation area are set within the medieval street plan which still survives. The market provided the focus for the town and was dominated by St. James's Church to the west. The main thoroughfare through the town may have been Eastgate and it is possible that

Chequergate was formerly the back lane to this main thoroughfare.

The only extant remains of the medieval period within the investigation area is the parish church dating to the late 15<sup>th</sup> century (Fig. 8, No. 2). This is generally believed to have replaced an earlier church, the remains of which were partially revealed during restoration work in 1868 (Field 1978, 15). The former graveyard associated with St. James's extended to the south (Fig. 8, No. 1) and possibly to the north (*ibid.*).

### *Post-medieval Archaeology*

Post-medieval archaeology is poorly represented on the Sites and Monuments Record with only a post-medieval wall recorded (Fig. 8, No. 4). Post-medieval artefacts were recovered during the new market hall development (Merrony 1989, 13) and the Mason's Arms hotel is recorded as having a 17<sup>th</sup> century origin (Field 1989, 22). Other post-medieval buildings are known as indicated by the schedule of listed buildings (DoE 1974) and a fuller's mill is recorded on Bridge Street (Wright 1982, 27).

### *Previous Archaeological Intervention*

No previous archaeological intervention has been identified on or in close proximity to



the site. During 1989 an archaeological evaluation was carried out 160m south of the site and revealed a sequence of post-medieval deposits overlying natural silt and clay layers (Merrony 1989, 9). Approximately 1m to 1.2m of archaeological deposits were apparent (*ibid.* 19).

### 5.5 Walk-over Survey

The site was visited on March 23rd, 1999 to assess the possible level of surviving archaeological deposits. The proposed development area comprises a tarmac yard and several buildings. Most of the buildings are considered fairly recent in date although two are older. The oldest is a 19<sup>th</sup> century warehouse with three storeys surviving. This building was incorporated into later warehouses on the site. In the northwest corner is a late 18<sup>th</sup> century or early 19<sup>th</sup> century building of only one storey with sliding doors at each end. This building is tiled throughout.

Much of the tarmac is open, although several dumps of refuse are apparent across the site. In the centre of the yard is a breeze block built wall forming four bays. Grass is present along the edges of the site, although this is interspersed with patches of concrete.

Only two manholes were identified during the survey, although drains were also found. External taps were also present and indicate the presence of an unmapped water supply.

With the possible exception of ground-probing radar, geophysical prospecting techniques are considered to be unsuitable at this site.

## 6. CONSTRAINTS

### 6.1 Heritage Constraints

#### *Statutory and Advisory Constraints*

The proposed development does not lie within a Scheduled Ancient Monument protected by the Ancient Monument and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979 (HMSO 1979). As such, any archaeological remains within the area of the proposed development are protected only through the implementation of PPG16 (DoE 1990).

No listed buildings fall within the proposed development site, although are present on Chequergate and Nichol Hill. The site also lies within the Louth Conservation Area and is also deemed as an Action Area (Williamson 1993, Map 1.1). As such development must meet other statutory criteria (HMSO 1990).

### 6.2 Other Constraints

The following risks have been identified and plotted on to Figure 10:

- a) Plots of all services (gas, electricity, water, British Telecom, Diamond Cable) in the vicinity of the proposed development were examined. Only a combined sewer pipe and an electricity cable enter the proposed development. However, this does not preclude the presence of other, unrecorded, services as evidenced by manholes and drain covers recorded in the walk-over survey.
- b) If further archaeological intervention is required, the excavation of trenches would entail a certain degree of risk which would be enhanced by the use of a mechanical excavator.

- c) Excavation of trenches should not take place in close proximity to standing buildings.

## 7. ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

For assessment of significance the *Secretary of State's criteria for scheduling ancient monuments* has been used (DoE 1990, Annex 4; See Appendix 1).

### Period

The proposed development area adjoins a medieval street and contains post-medieval industrial and habitation remains on the site. Such remains, existing within an urban environment, are typical of the periods.

### Rarity

Post-medieval industrial activity is not rare, but is not well studied, archaeologically. Standing remains of the post-medieval period are not rare. However, 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings may contain rare or unusual features.

### Documentation

Records of archaeological sites and finds made in the Louth area are kept in the Lincolnshire Sites and Monuments Record.

A general consideration of the archaeological potential of Louth has previously been produced (Field 1978). However, the present report provides the first site-specific consideration of the archaeological and historical aspects of the proposed development area.

There is some contemporary documentation regarding Chequergate and surrounding streets. This could be enhanced further by more detailed documentary research.

### Group value

Moderate group value can be ascertained

from the association of a post-medieval tannery with part of the medieval street pattern of Louth. Additionally, the group value is enhanced by archaeology occurring both as standing and buried remains.

### Survival/Condition

No trace of cellars could be found during the walk-over survey and post-medieval development is believed to be fairly restricted, despite being used as a tannery in the last century. As such, any remains associated with the tannery or any earlier archaeological deposits may survive in fair condition.

### Fragility/Vulnerability

As the proposed development may impact the investigation area, any and all archaeological deposits present on the site are extremely vulnerable.

### Diversity

Only industrial usage and general urban settlement of post-medieval date is clearly represented. Therefore, there is moderately low functional diversity in the vicinity of the site,

### Potential

Moderate to high potential exists for remains of a 19<sup>th</sup> century tanning yard to be present within the proposed development area. There is also moderate potential for general medieval settlement remains to be located in the area.

In consideration of the proximity of the river and documented floods, there is moderate potential for the survival of ancient environmental material due to waterlogging.

## 8. CONCLUSIONS

In the medieval period the site lay adjacent to the back lane of tofts fronting Eastgate. It



is possible that this area remained as open ground located between the back lane and the river. Development is known to have occurred by the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, although this possibly started earlier. This development culminated in the site having been used as a tannery during the last century.

Few archaeological sites appear on the Sites and Monuments Record. This is likely to be due to a lack of sub-surface archaeological examination rather than an absence of archaeological remains.

The area of the proposed development has been affected by the insertion of services. However, it is difficult to identify the full extent of these works from present ground observations. It is likely that post-medieval, and possibly earlier, remains survive in good condition at depth.

Ground probing radar is considered to be the only geophysical technique applicable to this site.

## 9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services would like to acknowledge the assistance of Mr S.P. Williamson of East Lindsey District Council who commissioned this report. The initial enquiry was handled by Mr John Stainton on behalf of Louth Town Council. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor and this report edited by Tom Lane. Access to the County Sites and Monuments Record was kindly provided by Mark Bennet and Sarah Grundy of the Archaeology Section, Lincolnshire County Council. Thanks are also due to the staff of the Lincolnshire Archives Office and Lincoln Central Library. Dave Start allowed access to the parish files maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

## 10. REFERENCES

All of the following sources were consulted in the data-gathering exercise. However, as some references duplicated information available in others, not all of them have been specifically referred to in the text.

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## 11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS	Archaeological Project Services
BGS	British Geological Survey
CBA	Council for British Archaeology
DoE	Department of the Environment
HMSO	Her Majesties' Stationary Office
IFA	Institute of Field Archaeologists
LAO	Lincolnshire Archive Office



LAS Lindsey Archaeological Services

RCHME Royal Commission for the Historic  
Monuments of England

SMR County Sites and Monuments  
Record number

TLA Trust for Lincolnshire Archaeology

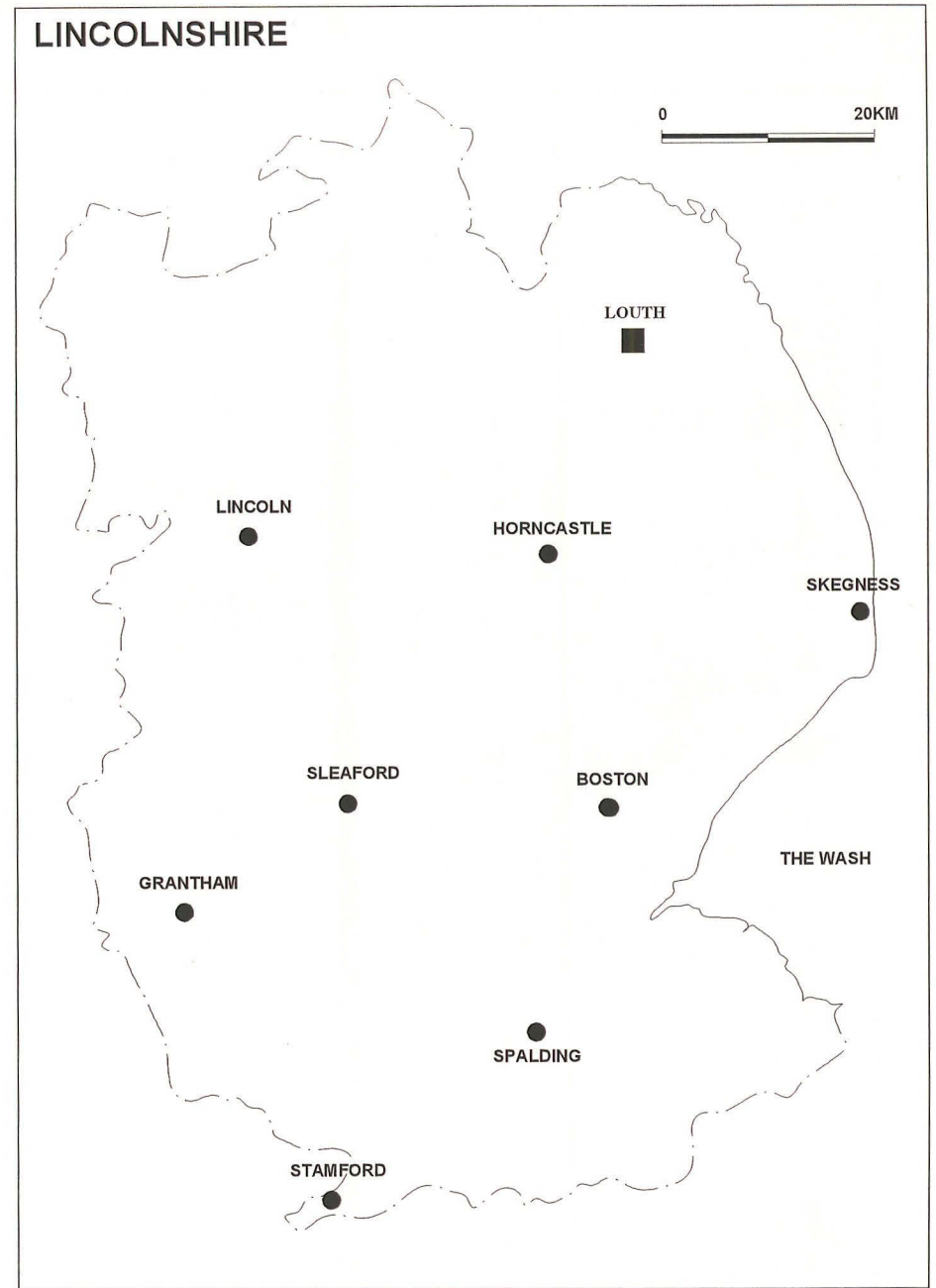
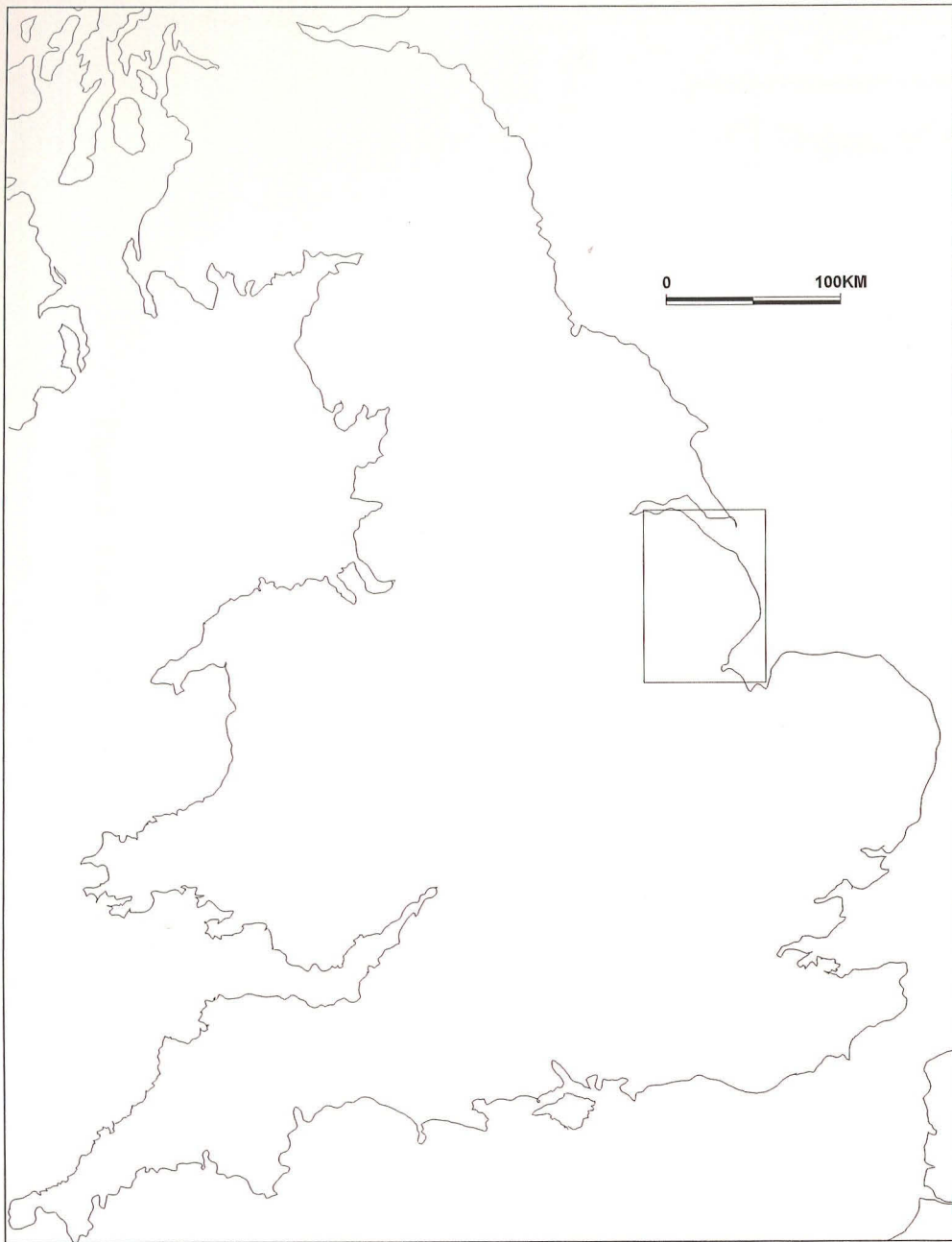
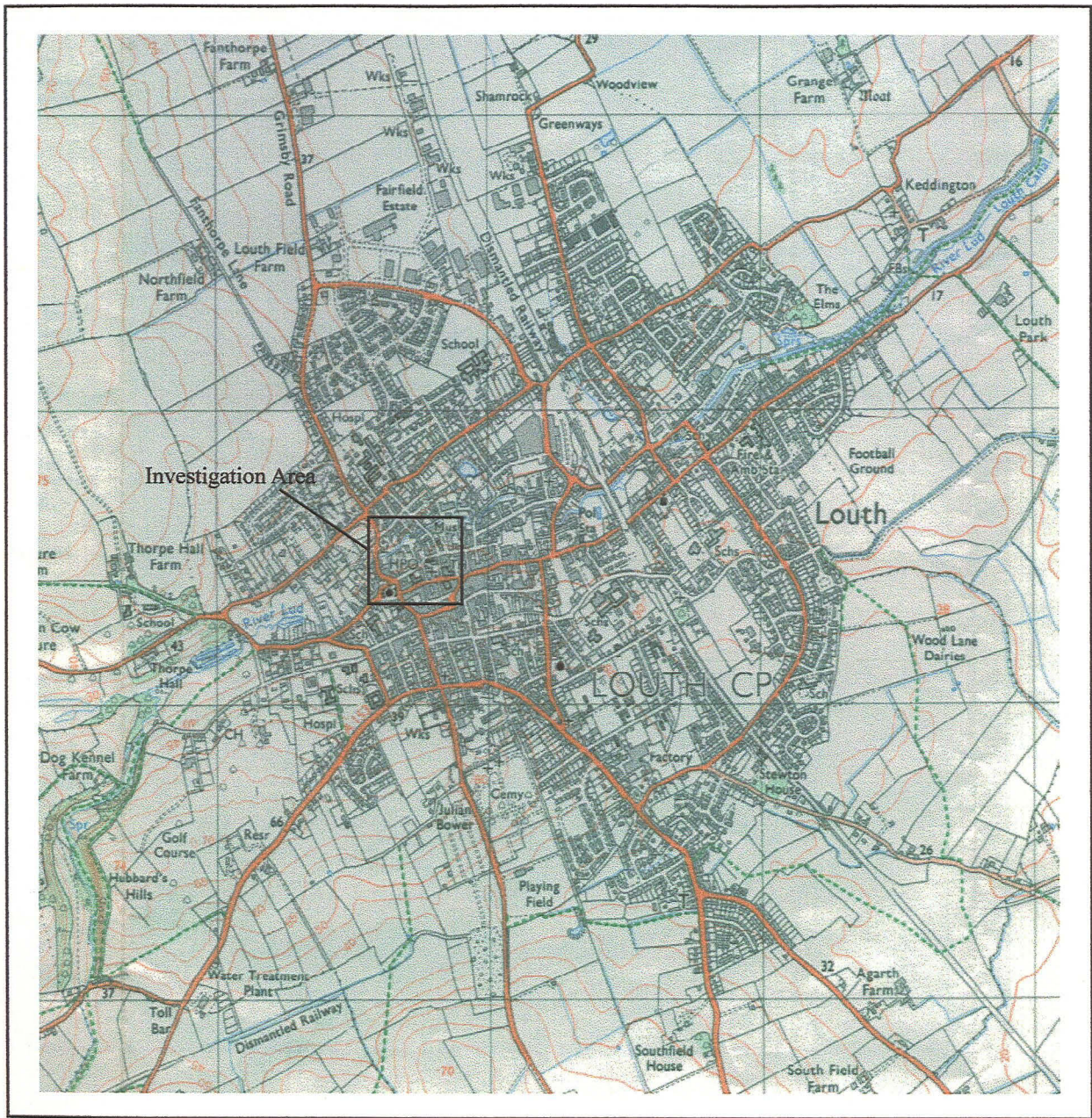


Figure 1 - General location map





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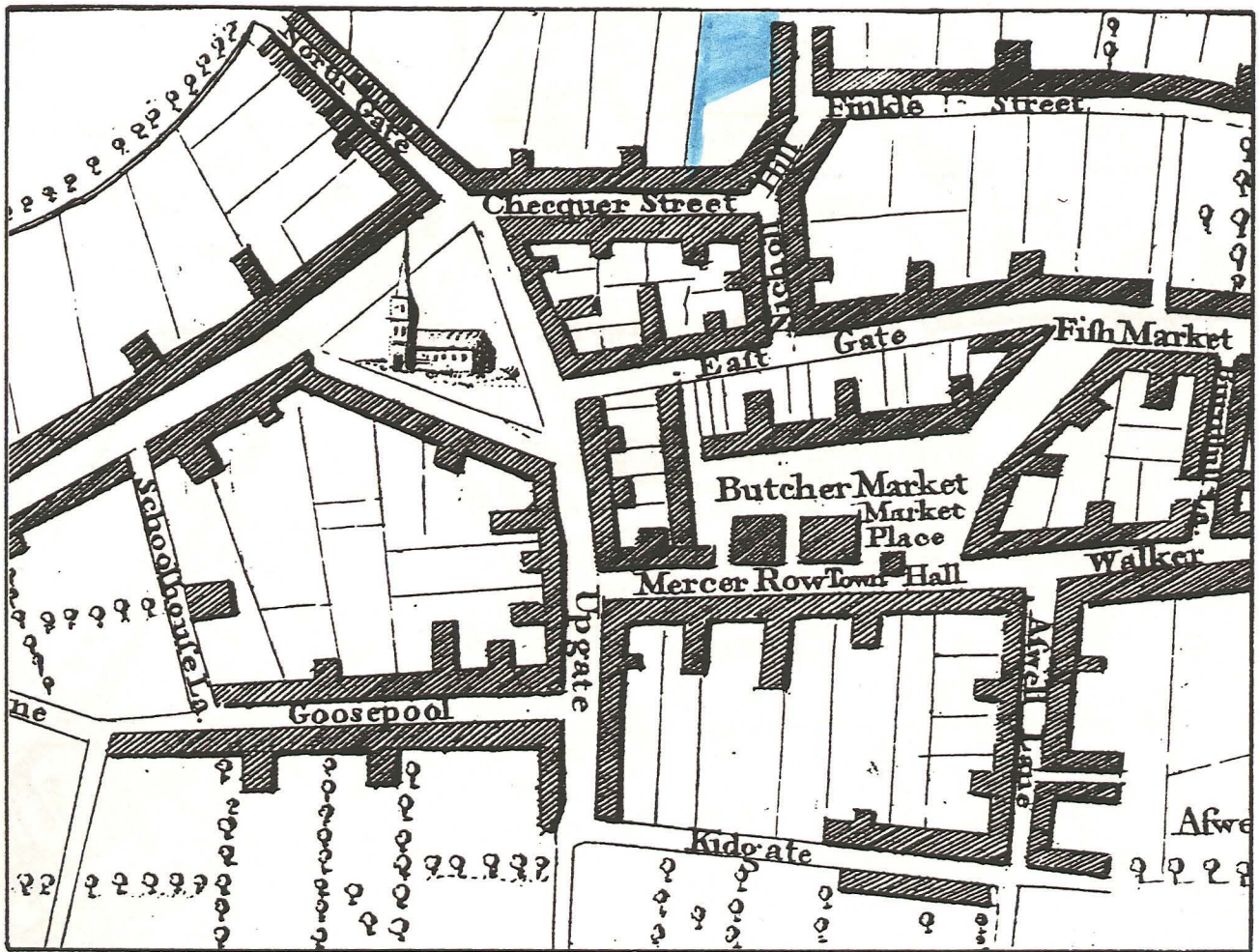
Figure 2 - Location of Investigation Area





Figure 3 - Site Location Plan



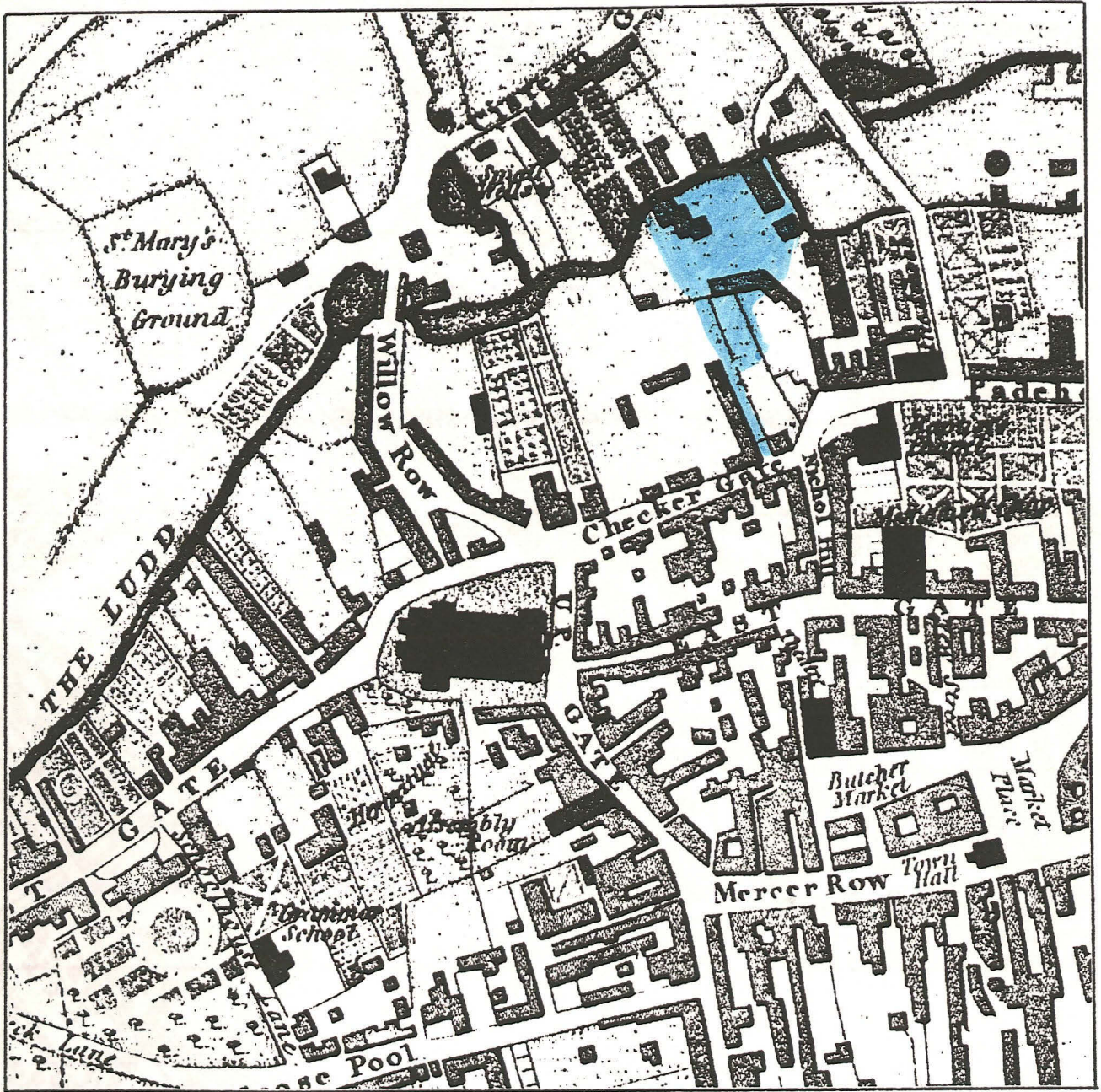


(no scale available)



Figure 4 - Extract from Armstrong's 'Map of Louth', 1788





(no scale available)



Figure 5 - Extract from Espin's 'Plan of Louth', 1808







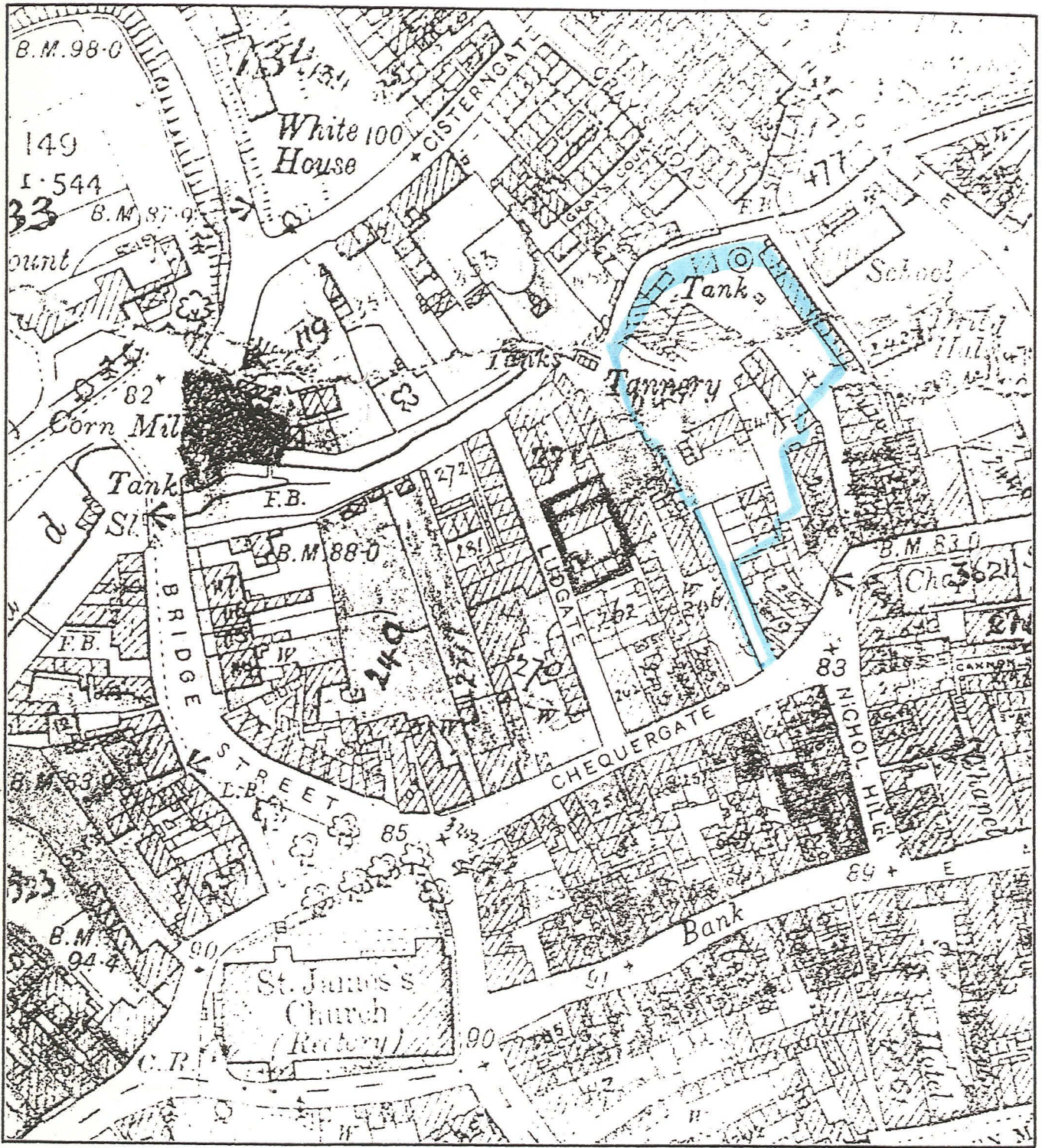
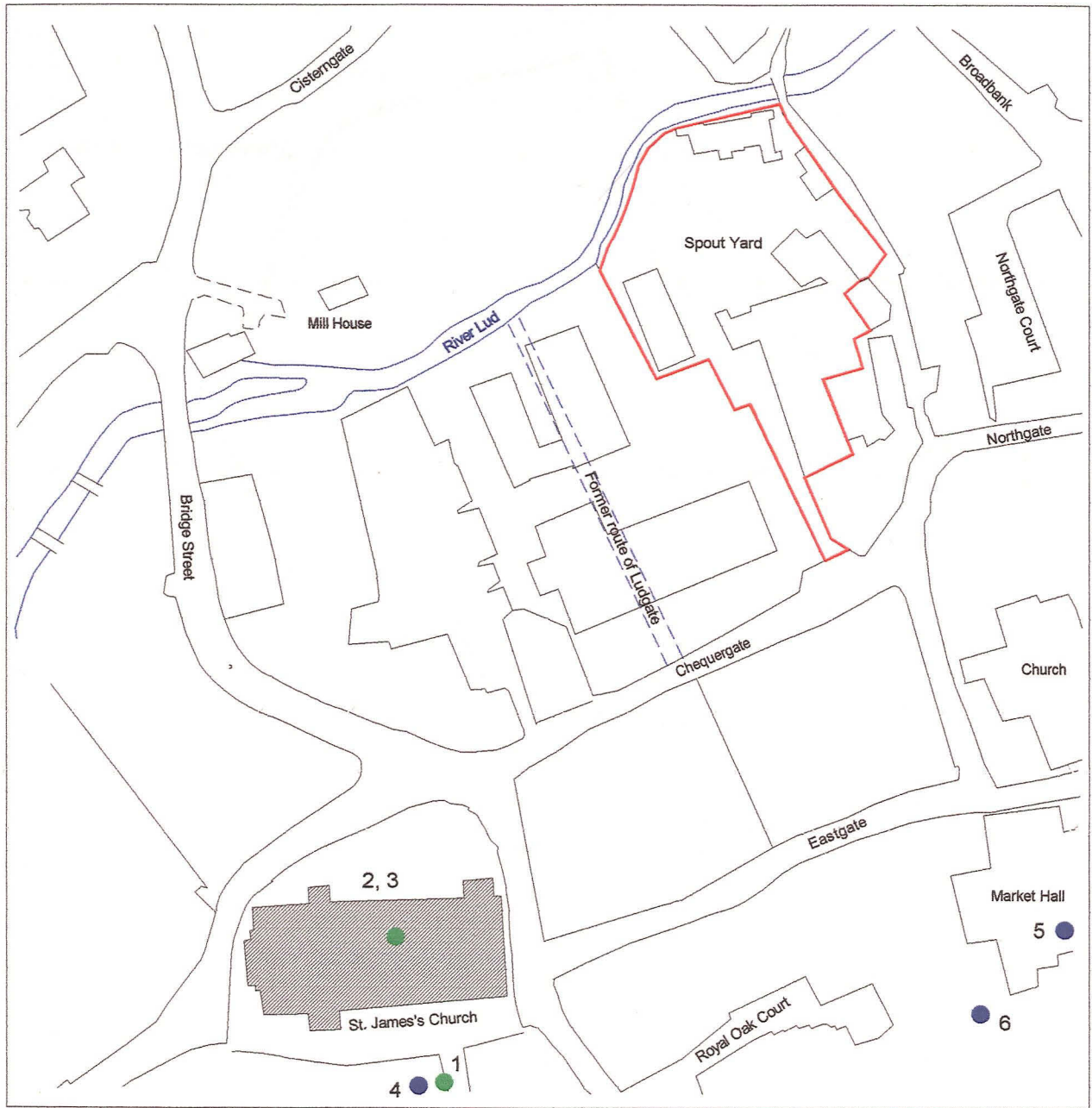


Figure 7 - Extract from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 25" Ordnance Survey Map, 1906








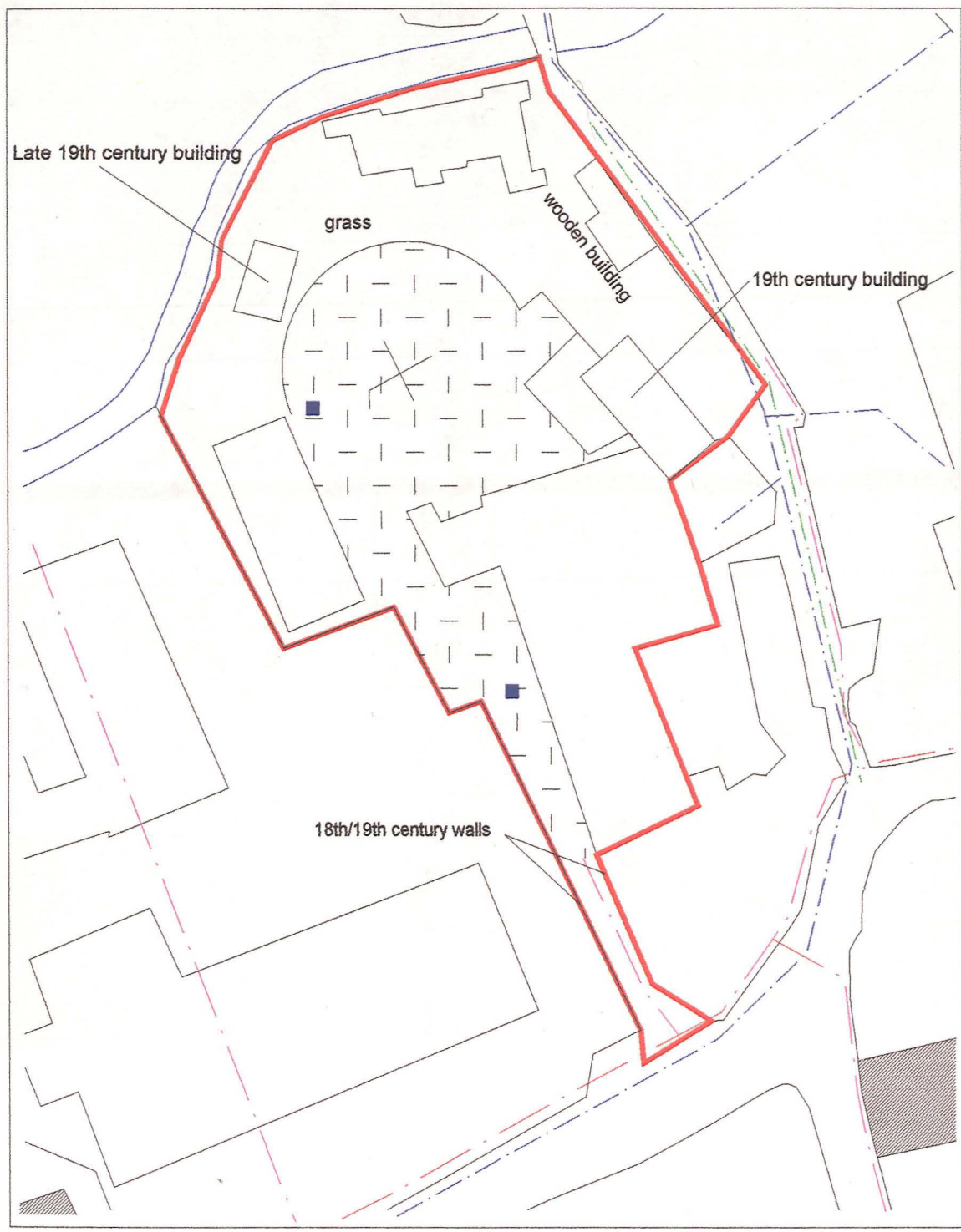
-  proposed development area
-  Medieval finds and sites
-  Post-medieval finds and sites

Figure 8 - Archaeological sites in the vicinity of proposed development











- |   |                           |   |                 |
|---|---------------------------|---|-----------------|
|  | Proposed development area |  | British Gas     |
|  | Listed building           |  | British Telecom |
|  | Electricity               |  | Manhole cover   |
|  | Combined water/sewer      |  | Hardstanding    |

Figure 9 - Known constraints within the proposed development area





Plate 1 - Aerial view of the proposed development site, looking southeast



## Appendix 1

### SECRETARY OF STATE'S CRITERIA FOR SCHEDULING ANCIENT MONUMENTS - extract from *Archaeology and Planning* DOE Planning Policy Guidance note 16, November 1990

The following criteria (which are not in any order of ranking), are used for assessing the national importance of an ancient monument and considering whether scheduling is appropriate. The criteria should not however be regarded as definitive; rather they are indicators which contribute to a wider judgement based on the individual circumstances of a case.

i *Period*: all types of monuments that characterise a category or period should be considered for preservation.

ii *Rarity*: there are some monument categories which in certain periods are so scarce that all surviving examples which retain some archaeological potential should be preserved. In general, however, a selection must be made which portrays the typical and commonplace as well as the rare. This process should take account of all aspects of the distribution of a particular class of monument, both in a national and regional context.

iii *Documentation*: the significance of a monument may be enhanced by the existence of records of previous investigation or, in the case of more recent monuments, by the supporting evidence of contemporary written records.

iv *Group value*: the value of a single monument (such as a field system) may be greatly enhanced by its association with related contemporary monuments (such as a settlement or cemetery) or with monuments of different periods. In some cases, it is preferable to protect the complete group of monuments, including associated and adjacent land, rather than to protect isolated monuments within the group.

v *Survival/Condition*: the survival of a monument's archaeological potential both above and below ground is a particularly important consideration and should be assessed in relation to its present condition and surviving features.

vi *Fragility/Vulnerability*: highly important archaeological evidence from some field monuments can be destroyed by a single ploughing or unsympathetic treatment; vulnerable monuments of this nature would particularly benefit from the statutory protection that scheduling confers. There are also existing standing structures of particular form or complexity whose value can again be severely reduced by neglect or careless treatment and which are similarly well suited by scheduled monument protection, even if these structures are already listed buildings.

vii *Diversity*: some monuments may be selected for scheduling because they possess a combination of high quality features, others because of a single important attribute.

viii *Potential*: on occasion, the nature of the evidence cannot be specified precisely but it may still be possible to document reasons anticipating its existence and importance and so to demonstrate the justification for scheduling. This is usually confined to sites rather than upstanding monuments.