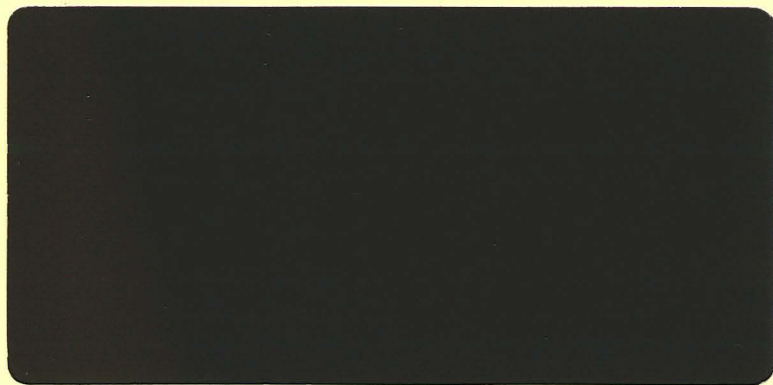


99/23

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
MAREHAM-LE-FEN
PRIMARY SCHOOL
LINCOLNSHIRE
(MPS99)**



A P S
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES



ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
MAREHAM-LE-FEN
PRIMARY SCHOOL
LINCOLNSHIRE
(MPS99)

Work Undertaken For
Lincolnshire County Council

Report Compiled by
Rachael Hall BA (Hons)

August 1999

Planning Application No: S/114/2041/98/3
National Grid Reference: TF 282 613
City and County Museum Accession No: 82.99

A.P.S. Report No: 102/99

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

CONTENTS

List of Figures Plates

1.	Summary	1
2.	Introduction	1
	2.1 Definition of a watching Brief	1
	2.2 Planning Background	1
	2.3 Topography and Geology	1
	2.4 Archeological Setting	1
3.	Aims	2
4.	Methods	2
5.	Results	2
6.	Discussion	3
7.	Conclusions	3
8.	Acknowledgements	4
9.	Personnel	4
10.	Bibliography	4
11.	Abbreviations	4

Appendices

1	Context Description
2	The Finds, Paul Cope Faulkner and Gary Taylor
3	Glossary
4	The Archive

List of Figures

- Figure 1 General Location Plan
- Figure 2 Site Location Plan
- Figure 3 Site Plan and section locations
- Figure 4 Sections 1-3

Plates

- 1 Showing Section 1
- 2 Showing Section 3

1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the construction of a school hall, entrance lobby, and associated storage at Mareham-Le-Fen Primary School, Lincolnshire. The watching brief monitored the excavation of groundworks associated with the development.

Mareham-Le-Fen is referenced in the eleventh century Domesday survey and lies 1.5km southwest of extensive earthworks of the medieval Cistercian Abbey at Revesby. The village has several examples of Mud and Stud buildings, the Lincolnshire vernacular norm of the 17th century.

The only archaeological feature recorded on the site likely to be of pre-modern date was an undated gully sealed beneath a layer of subsoil. A number of recent deposits contained finds of 20th century date and are probably associated with the construction of the existing school building.

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 Mr. S. Owen on behalf of the chief property officer of Lincolnshire County Council to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the construction of a new school hall and entrance lobby at Mareham-Le-Fen Primary School (National Grid Reference TF282613). Approval for the development was sought through the submission of planning application S/114/2041/98/3. The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with the requirements detailed in the Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook (LCC 1998).

2.3 Topography and Geology

Mareham-Le-Fen is located on the fen edge, 25km west of Skegness, and 8km south of Horncastle in the administrative district of East Lindsey, Lincolnshire (Fig 1)

The development site is in the centre of the village on open and generally level land at c.10m OD. The village is surrounded by low lying agricultural land.

Local soils are of the Cannamore association, typically calcareous, fine loamy or clayey, with slowly permeable subsoils that are occasionally waterlogged (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 141).

2.4 Archaeological setting

Mareham-le-Fen Primary School is located in an area of archaeological remains of prehistoric and later date.

A Bronze Age axe has previously been found only 100m to the north of the school. Numerous other prehistoric

bronze or stone axes and palstaves have been found in the parish, at various locations mostly between 0.5km and 2km to the south of the school.

A scatter of Romano-British pottery, perhaps signifying the location of a small settlement, has previously been identified approximately 2km southwest of the school.

In the Domesday Book of 1086 Mareham -Le-Fen is located within the Wapentake of Horncastle and referred to as *Marum* (Foster and Longley, 1976, lxxx), derived from the Old English name for mere (Ekwall 1974, 314). The survey also recorded a church and priest, 60 acres of meadow and 300 acres of underwood for the village.

A medieval tile kiln has been identified and excavated at Mareham-le-Fen. Located at the western edge of the village, about 0.5km southwest of the school, the kiln dated to 1300-1350 and was used in the manufacture of roof tiles. Other medieval discoveries in the parish include a hoard of coins of the period (Barley 1961, 11).

Mareham-Le-Fen is a largely brick built village, although several examples of 'Mud and Stud' architecture, Lincolnshire's vernacular norm of the 17th century survive. The Royal Oak located on the main road is a fine example of this building type (DoE, 1997, 16).

The parish church of St. Helens, approximately 300m west of the school, dates to the 13th century, with 14th and 15th century additions. The exterior facade was rebuilt in the late 19th century (Pevsner and Harris 1984, 551).

Located 1.5km to the southeast of the development site are extensive earthworks associated with the medieval Cistercian Abbey at Revesby, founded in 1142 (*ibid.*, 610).

3. AIMS

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

4. METHODS

As part of the development a 20m x10m area adjacent to the east side of the school was stripped of tarmac (Fig 3). Within the stripped area foundation trenches were opened by mechanical excavator to a maximum depth of 2m. Sides of the trenches were cleaned and rendered vertical to enable identification of remains. The depth and thickness of each deposit were measured from the ground surface. Each deposit was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A full list of all contexts and interpretations appears as Appendix 2. A photographic record was compiled and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10.

Records of the deposits and features recognised during the watching brief were examined, and then phased.

5. RESULTS

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

The earliest deposits recorded were naturally formed brownish yellow sands and gravels (004) and (011) recorded in the foundation trenches (Fig 4 Sections 1 and 3). These layers were 80mm thick to the limit of excavation and were identified at a depth of 0.9m below the existing ground surface.

Phase 2 Undated deposits

Towards the northeast of the building plot a 0.7m wide and 100mm deep (to the limit of excavation) gully (010) recorded in Section 3 cut through the Phase 1 natural deposits (Fig 4). The fill of the gully appeared to be sealed by a 0.47m thick reddish brown sandy silt subsoil (008), although the indistinct boundary between the two makes this observation uncertain. No dating evidence was retrieved from the gully.

The subsoil was also recorded as (002, 003, 005 and 008) in sections 1, 2 and 3 (Fig 4).

Phase 3 Modern deposits

A 0.44m thick dark brown silt (006 and 007) identified in Sections 2 and 3 (Fig 4) contained tableware, glass and plastic of 20th century date. This deposit probably represents levelling material associated with construction of the existing school building.

The levelling material was sealed by a 50mm thick deposit (001) of stone and tarmac, forming the surface of a yard adjacent to the school building. This deposit contained further 19th-20th century pottery and glass, together with a fragment of late medieval pottery. In addition, a small quantity of animal bones and a piece of 18th-19th century pottery was recovered as unstratified material from the site (Appendix 2).

6. DISCUSSION

Natural sands and gravels formed the earliest deposits recorded at the site. A gully recorded in Section 3 appeared to be sealed beneath subsoil, suggesting a pre-modern date for the feature (Fig 4). Deposits recorded immediately above the subsoil were of recent date and probably associated with construction of the existing school.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigations at the Mareham-Le-Fen Primary School, Lincolnshire were undertaken as the site lies at the heart of Mareham-Le-Fen village, dated to at least the eleventh century. Prehistoric artefacts had also previously been found close by.

No dated archaeological deposits earlier than the twentieth century were recorded at the site, although an undated gully recorded on the north side of the development area may be of pre-modern date. It is possible that earlier deposits may have been removed or severely truncated during the construction of the existing school buildings. However, the absence of any non twentieth century

artefacts might suggest that the site was always peripheral to any earlier settlement activity.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services would like to acknowledge the assistance of Mr. S. Owen of Lincolnshire County Council who commissioned the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor and this report was edited by Dale Trimble and Tom Lane.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Gary Taylor
Site Supervisor: Fiona Walker
CAD Illustration: Phil Mills
Post-excavation Analyst: Rachael Hall

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Barley, M.W., 1961 *East Midlands Archaeological Bulletin* 4

DoE, 1997, *List of Buildings of Special and Historic Interest*, District of East Lindsey, Lincolnshire

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

Foster, C.W. and Longley, T.(Eds), 1976, *The Lincolnshire Domesday and the Lindsey Survey*, The Lincoln Record Society 19

Hodge, C.A.H., Burton, R.G.O., Corbett, W.H., Evans, R. and Seale, R.S., 1984, *Soils and their use in Eastern England*,

Soil Survey of England and Wales 13

IFA, 1997, *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

LCC, 1998, *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook*

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

11. ABBREVIATIONS

DoE Department of Environment

IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

LCC Lincolnshire County Council

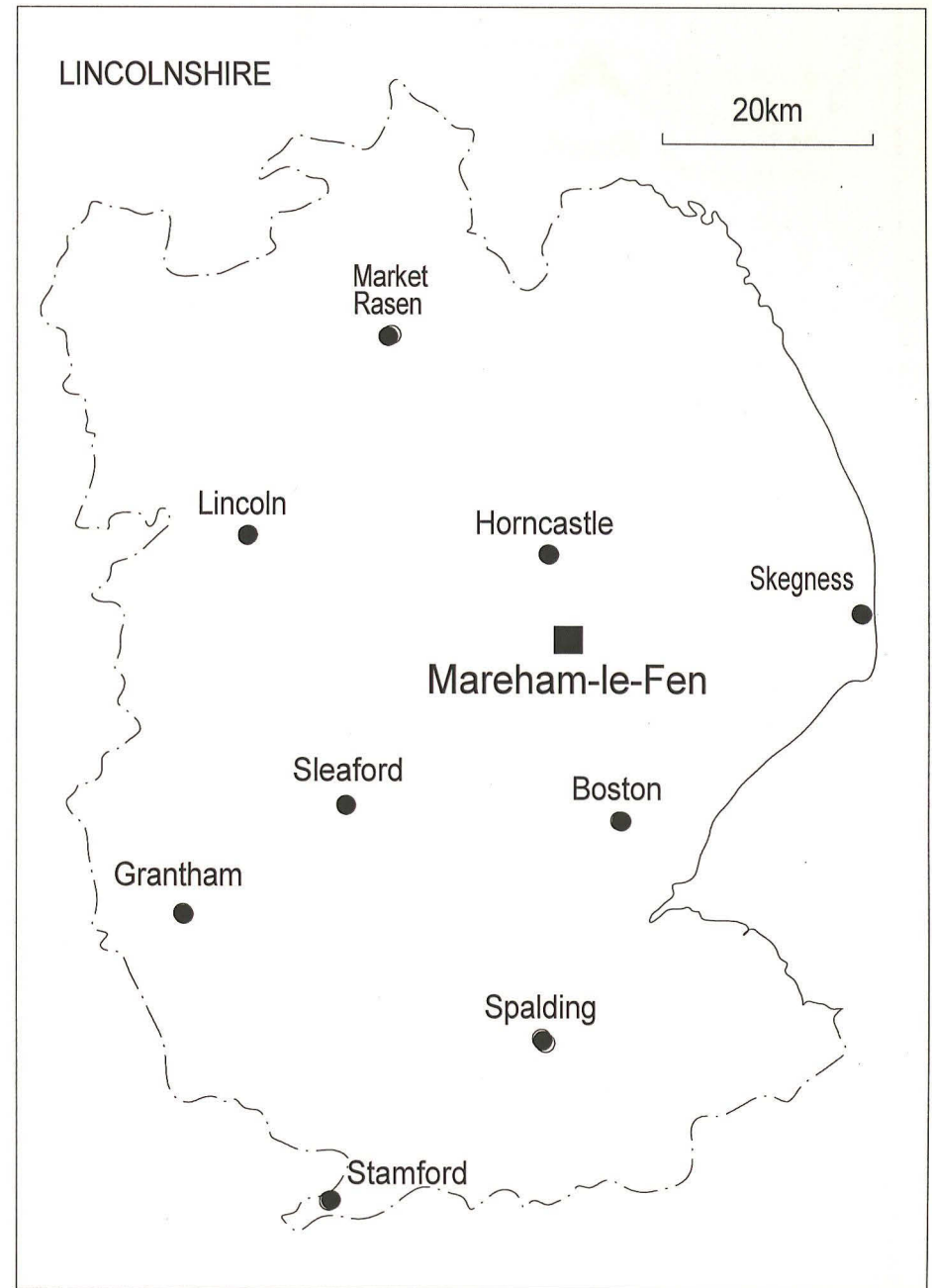
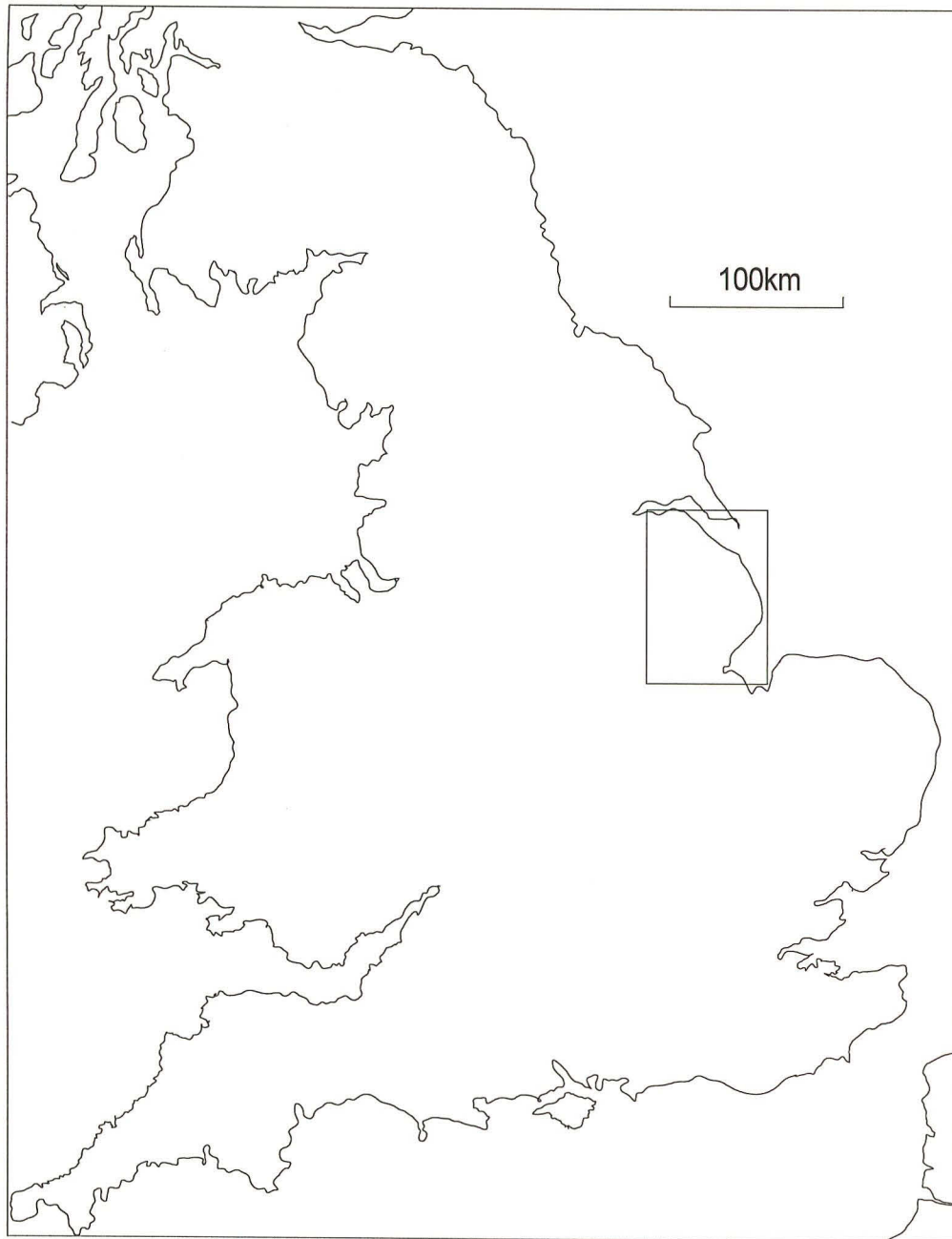


Figure 1 General Location Plan

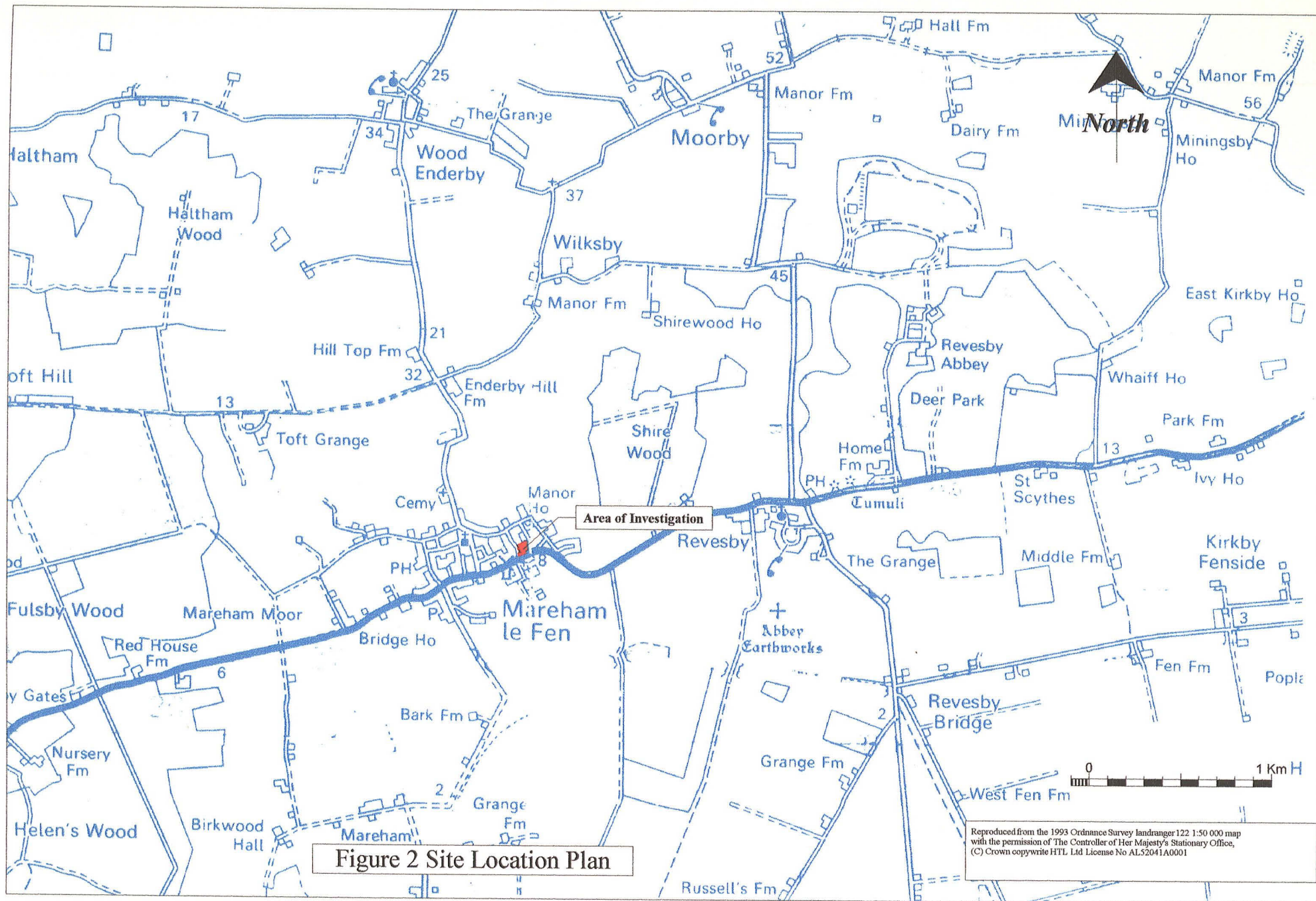


Figure 2 Site Location Plan

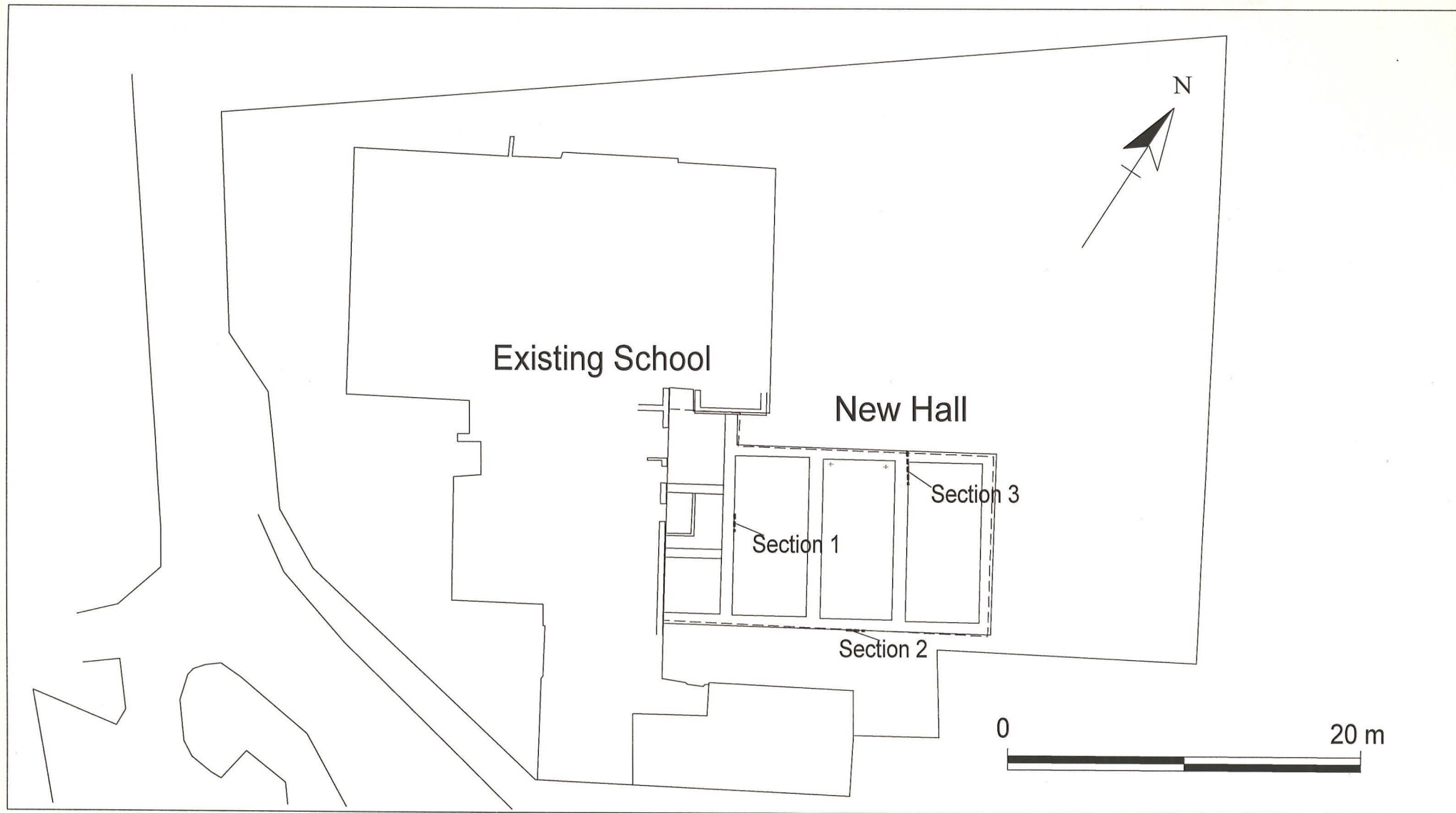


Figure 3 Site plan and section locations

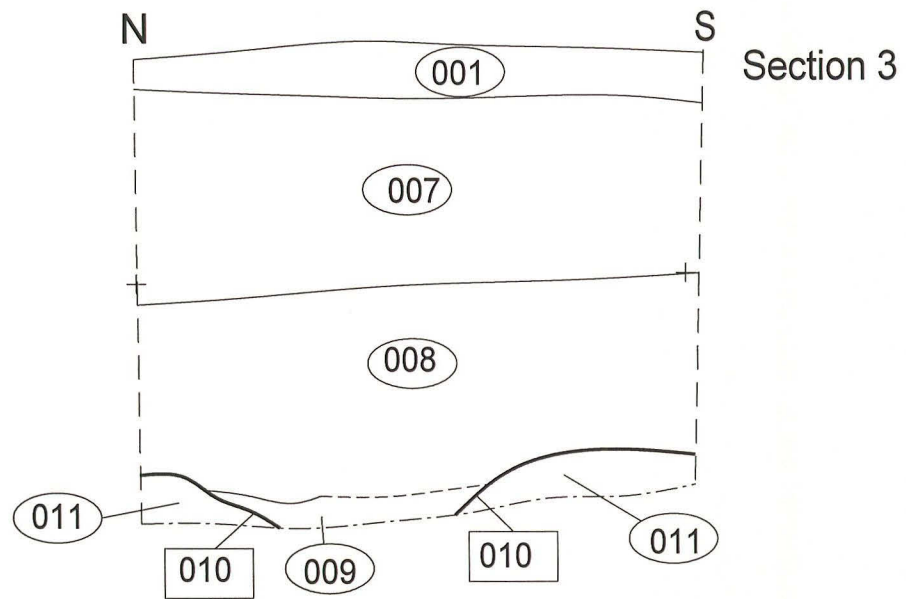
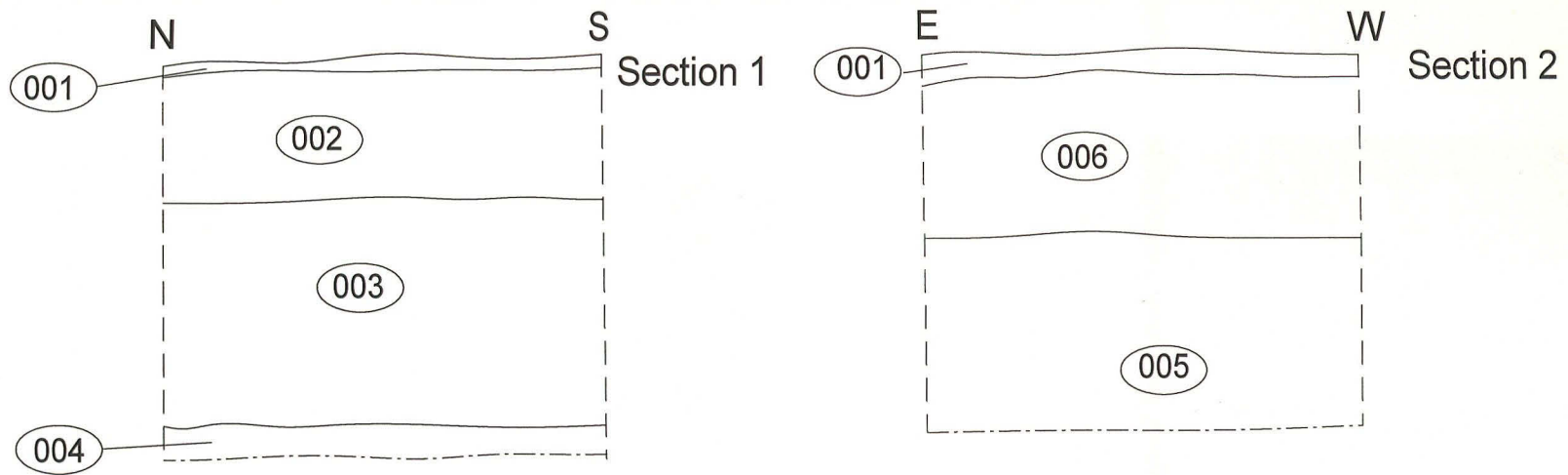


Figure 4 Sections 1-3



Plate 1 Showing Section 1, looking east.
General section through Foundation Trench.



Plate 2 Showing Section 3, looking north east.
Gulley [009].

Appendix 1
CONTEXT DESCRIPTION

Context No	Description	Interpretation
001	Dark blackish grey silt with stone and tarmac, thickness 0.05m	Levelling
002	Dark brown silt, thickness 0.4m	Subsoil
003	Mid reddish brown sandy silt, thickness 0.5m	Subsoil
004	Light- mid reddish brown yellow silty sand, thickness 0.08m	Natural
005	Mid brown sandy silt, thickness 0.45m	Subsoil
006	Dark blackish brown sandy silt, thickness 0.4m	Levelling
007	Dark brown silt, organic content, thickness 0.42m	Topsoil/Levelling
008	Mid dark brown sandy silt, thickness 0.47m	Subsoil
009	Midbrown grey silty sand, thickness 0.05m	Fill of 010
010	Linear cut with gentle sloping sides, not fully excavated. Seen extent 0.7mx 0.7m x 0.1m	Gully
011	Mid brownish yellow sand and gravel, thickness unknown	Natural

Appendix 2

THE FINDS

Paul Cope-Faulkner BA AIFA and Gary Taylor MA

Provenance

All of the material was recovered from levelling deposits (001 and 006) or was unstratified.

The earliest material, medieval pottery, is a local product made at Toynton All Saints, approximately 13km to the east. The more recent pottery artefacts are likely to be from Staffordshire, though there is a piece of stoneware from Nottingham.

Range

The range of material is detailed in the table.

A single sherd of Toynton All Saints ware pottery is the earliest object found, though the majority of the small assemblage is comprised of 19th-20th century objects. In addition to pottery the assemblage consists of glass, plastic and animal bone. The unstratified cattle rib displays sawing marks butchery, a post-medieval technique of butchery.

The trademarked bottle glass from context (001) has the moulded mark:

L^{TD}
]ASTLE

though with the 'L^{TD}' at right-angles to ']ASTLE'.

Context	Description	Context Date
unstratified	1x Nottingham salt-glazed stoneware, 18 th -mid 19 th century 1x cattle rib, butchered (sawn) 1x sheep clavicle, rodent gnawed 1x unidentified bone fragment, possibly young sheep rib	18 th -mid 19 th century
001	1x brown glazed tableware, 20 th century 1x white ceramic bottle, 19 th century 1x Toynton All Saints ware, 14 th -15 th century 1x vessel glass, trademarked, 19 th -early 20 th century	20 th century
006	1x tableware, 20 th century 1x plastic, 20 th century 1x window glass	20 th century

Condition

All of the material is in good condition and presents no long-term storage problems. Archive storage of the collection is by material class.

Documentation

There have been few previous archaeological investigations at Mareham-le-Fen though details of archaeological sites and discoveries in the area are maintained in the Lincolnshire County Council Sites and Monuments Record.

Potential

The assemblage has limited potential though the recent date of almost the whole of the material would suggest that there was limited or no medieval or earlier activity at the site.

Appendix 3

GLOSSARY

- Bronze Age** Part of the prehistoric era (*q.v.*) characterised by the introduction and use of bronze for tools and weapons. In Britain this period dates from approximately 2,000-700 BC.
- 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, *e.g.* (004).
- Cut** A cut refers to the physical action of digging a posthole, pit, ditch, foundation trench, *etc.* Once the fills of these features are removed during an archaeological investigation the original 'cut' is therefore exposed and subsequently recorded.
- Cistercian** Religious order of monks.
- Dumped deposit** These are deposits, often laid down intentionally, that raise a land surface. They may be the result of casual waste disposal or may be deliberate attempts to raise the ground surface.
- Earthwork** Remains of structures, shown in the landscape by visible anomalies in the topography.
- 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).
- Mud and Stud** Lincolnshire's vernacular architectural norm of the 17th century, timber framed structures with wooden staves embedded in mud.
- Natural** Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity.
- Prehistoric** The period of human history prior to the introduction of writing. In Britain the prehistoric period lasts from the first evidence of human occupation about 500,000 BC, until the Roman invasion in the middle of the 1st century AD.
- Romano-British** Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.

Appendix 4

The Archive

The archive consists of:

11	Context records
4	Scale drawings
1	Photographic record sheet
1	Stratigraphic matrix
1	Bag of finds

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: 82.99

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: MPS99

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.

Archaeological Project Services shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project Specification.