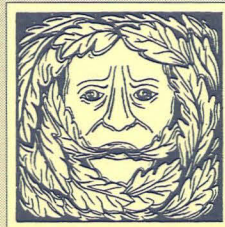


JB + SMR

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
OF LAND ADJACENT TO THE
PHOENIX INN, MAIN ROAD,
WIGTOFT, LINCOLNSHIRE**
Boston Borough
(WMR97)



A P S
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES



Lincolnshire County Council
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28 JUL 00

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PLN 13548
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OF LAND ADJACENT TO THE
PHOENIX INN, MAIN ROAD,
WIGTOFT, LINCOLNSHIRE**
Boston Borough
(WMR97)

Work Undertaken For
West Ashby Construction

Report compiled by
Paul Cope-Faulkner BA (Hons) AIFA
and Tobin Rayner BSc (Hons)

June 2000

Planning Application No: B20/0629/94 TT
National Grid Reference: TF 2634 3612
City and County Museum Accession No: 2000.152



A.P.S. Report No: 88/00

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1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of foundation trenches for the construction of a dwelling off Main Road, Wigtoft, Lincolnshire.

The watching brief was undertaken as the site lay within an area of known archaeological presence dating from the Saxon period.

A natural deposit sealed by subsoil was revealed cut by modern drainage ditches.

A sherd of 9th - 12th century Stamford Ware pottery was recovered from a modern drainage ditch fill, probably suggesting medieval activity in the vicinity of the development area.

Other finds retrieved from the investigation included pottery of 18th and 19th century date, as well as brick fragments.

Sealing the modern drainage ditches was a sequence of a buried topsoil, dumped deposits and a car park surface.

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 purposes 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 West Ashby Construction to undertake an archaeological watching brief during construction of three dwellings off Main Road, Wigtoft, Lincolnshire (Fig. 4). Approval for the development was sought through the submission of planning application B20/0629/94 TT. Permission was granted subject to a standard condition for archaeological recording. The watching brief for the first dwelling was carried out on the 11th December 1997 and the 5th March 1998.

On completion of the watching brief on the first dwelling Steven Membery, the Community Archaeologist for Boston District Council dispensed with the condition for archaeological recording on the further two dwellings because they were being constructed over the site of a previous public house.

2.3 Topography and Geology

Wigtoft is situated 10km southwest of Boston and 13km north of Spalding among the fens of south Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The site is 140m southeast of Wigtoft village centre as defined by the church of SS. Peter and Paul on land adjacent to Main Road (Fig. 3). The site is located at National Grid Reference TF 2634 3612 and is situated at a height of c. 4.2m OD on fairly flat, level land.

Local soils are of the Romney Series, typically coarse silty gleyic brown calcareous alluvial soils (Robson 1990, 26). To the east are soils of the Rockliffe Association Series, coarse silty alluvial gleys, and Wisbech Series, coarse silty calcareous alluvial gley soils (*ibid.* 25 and

36). These soils overlie a drift geology of younger marine alluvium (sandy silt, sand and clay) which in turn seals a solid geology of Jurassic Ampthill Clay (BGS 1995).

2.4 Archaeological Setting

Wigtoft is situated in an area of known archaeological presence dating from the Saxon period. Since at least 2000 BC the area has been subjected to a series of marine and freshwater inundations resulting in the deposition of several metres of alluvium (silts and clays). Consequently, any prehistoric material is believed to lie at a significant depth.

The Fens were extensively occupied during the Romano-British period (AD50-410), although no material of this date has yet been found in the neighbourhood of Wigtoft.

Saxon occupation of the area is represented by pottery found at two locations near Wigtoft. The first, located 1km northeast of the site, produced Late Saxon Stamford Ware and is associated with an area of raised ground, possibly the site of a settlement (Fig. 2, B20/008). The second area, in the region of the hamlet of Burtoft, has produced pottery of mid to late Saxon date.

Wigtoft is first mentioned in a charter dated to 1316. The name, recorded as *Wiketoft* is derived from the Old Scandinavian for 'house (*toft*) by the *vik*', with *vik* meaning bay or creek (Ekwall 1974, 518). There is no reference to Wigtoft in the Domesday Survey of 1086, although Burtoft is recorded as belonging to Crowland Abbey (Foster and Longley 1976). However, the amount of land held by Crowland is insufficient to include Wigtoft.

Notwithstanding the lack of early records to Wigtoft, parts of the parish church of SS.

Peter and Paul's are Norman in style, dating to the 11th - 12th century. These Norman features are the base of the tower and elements of the nave wall, and the church also contains later alterations of the 13th century (Pevsner and Harris 1989, 798). Medieval pottery is also known from Burtoft (Fig. 2, B20/010) and a small settlement associated with Casterton House, 800m to the northwest (Fig. 2, B20/001 and 003).

3. AIMS

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

4. METHODS

The foundation trenches were machined to a depth of approximately 0.85m (Plate 1). Following mechanical excavation, the sides of all 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 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 during the watching brief was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services practice.

Finds recovered from those deposits excavated were examined and a period date assigned where possible. Records of the deposits and features recognised during the

watching brief were also examined. A list of all contexts and interpretations appears as Appendix 1. Phasing was assigned based on artefact dating (Appendix 2) and the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them.

5. RESULTS

Two phases of activity were identified:

Phase 1 Natural deposits
Phase 2 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 (Fig. 5 - 6)

The earliest deposit encountered during the investigation was a firm light to mid yellow sand and silt (005), representing the underlying geology.

A deposit of mid brown silt (004) measuring 0.30m thick was encountered above the natural sand and silt. Identified as a subsoil this deposit did not contain artefacts.

Phase 2 Modern deposits (Fig. 5 - 6, Plate 2)

Overlying the subsoil in the northeast corner of the footing trench was a mid greyish brown silt (006). Containing 18th - 19th century pottery and a hand-made brick this layer has been interpreted as a levelling deposit. A sherd of Stamford Ware pottery dated to the 9th - 12th century was also recovered from the layer.

Located in the southwest corner of the trench were two drainage ditches (011) and (013), both containing similar dark silt fills

(009) and (012) respectively. Pottery dated to the 18th century was recovered from deposit (009). Sealing these two drainage ditches was a dark brownish black silt layer (010). Measuring 0.50m thick this deposit containing a large quantity of ash and three sherds of 19th century pottery has been interpreted as a dumping layer.

A third drainage ditch (008) was recorded centrally within the footings trench and contained a dark greyish brown silt (007), with 18th century pottery, brick and tile inclusions. Overlying this deposit was a buried topsoil of dark blackish brown silt (003).

Sealing the whole site was a 0.14m thick light greyish white stone and crushed stone hard core (002) below a 0.12m thick loose light to mid yellow sand and gravel car park surface (001).

6. DISCUSSION

Natural deposits comprising sand and silt, encountered within the development area, are characteristic of the underlying geology. The sand and silt subsoil probably originated as alluvium produced from an episode of flooding, but was subsequently transformed, perhaps by agriculture.

The modern drainage ditches, cutting the natural, probably serviced the nearby buildings, with the dumped deposits sealing these ditches being laid down at the same time as the overlying car park was constructed.

Although only late post-medieval archaeological features were recorded during the investigation, the recovery of a sherd of 9th - 12th century Stamford Ware pottery suggests that there was some medieval

activity taking place in the vicinity.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigations on land off Main Road, Wigtoft, Lincolnshire were undertaken because the site lay within an area of known archaeological presence dating from the Saxon period.

No definite archaeological remains prior to the post-medieval period were revealed and only a sequence of natural, subsoil, recent drainage ditches, buried soil and a car park surface was recorded.

However, as one of the first archaeological interventions in the village, this investigation provides useful data regarding depths of archaeological and natural deposits and their state of preservation.

Several sherds of pottery were recovered from the modern deposits. The collection is largely of 18th to 19th century wares and is typical of this part of Lincolnshire. However the recovery of medieval pottery does suggest activity in the area at that time.

The nature of the local site conditions would suggest that few environmental indicators would survive, other than through charring.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services would like to acknowledge the assistance of West Ashby Construction who commissioned the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor and this report was edited by Tom Lane. Steven Membery, the Community Archaeologist for Boston District Council, permitted examination of the relevant files maintained

by the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire. Hilary Healey kindly examined the pottery and other finds.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Gary Taylor
Supervisor: Fiona Walker
Finds Processing: Denise Buckley
Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner and Tobin Rayner
Post-excavation Analyst: Paul Cope-Faulkner and Tobin Rayner

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Robson, J.D., 1990, *Soils of the Boston and Spalding District (Sheet 131)*, Memoirs of the Soil Survey of Great Britain

11. ABBREVIATIONS

BGS. British Geological Survey

IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

B Reference code used by the Boston
District Community Archaeologist

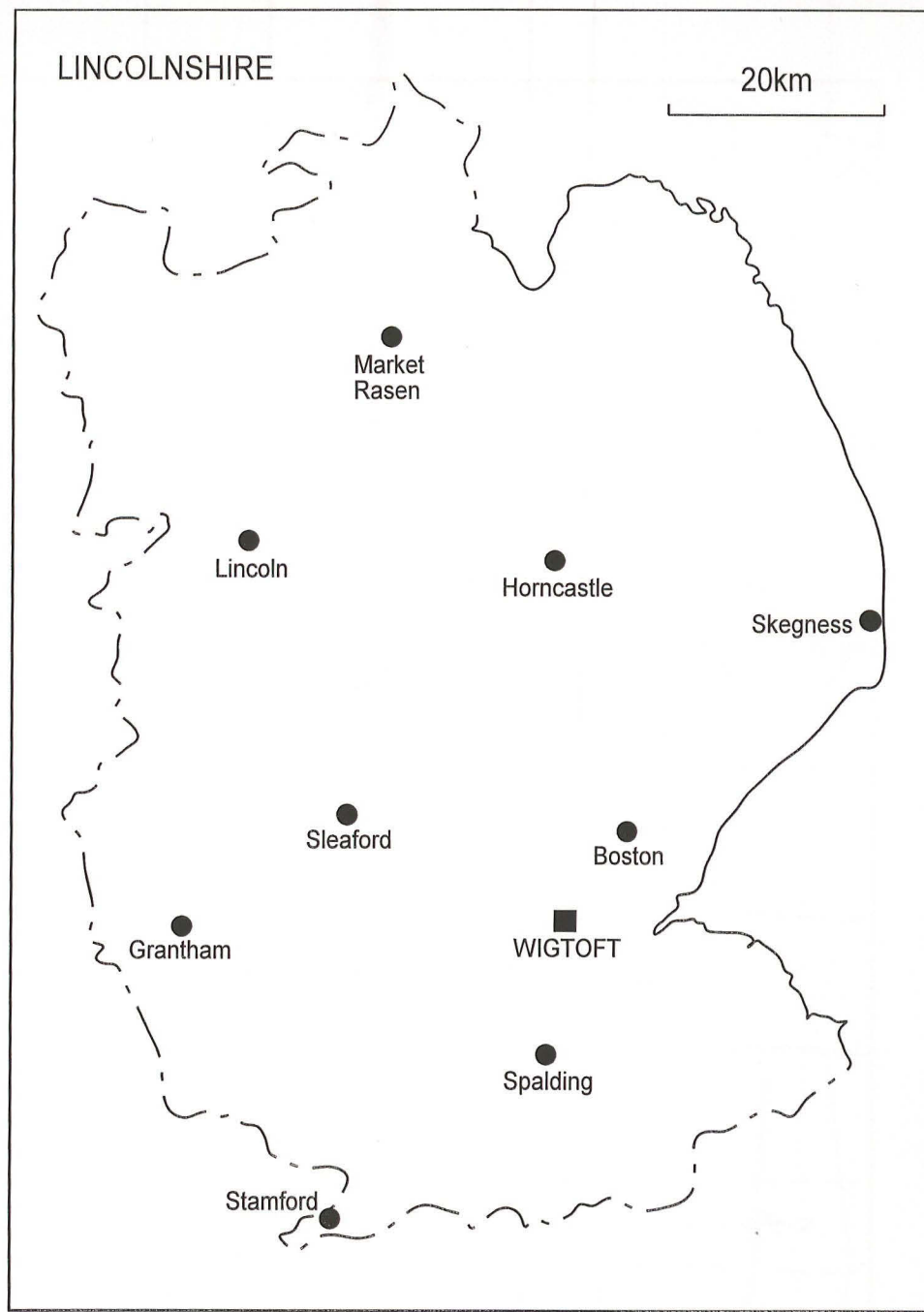
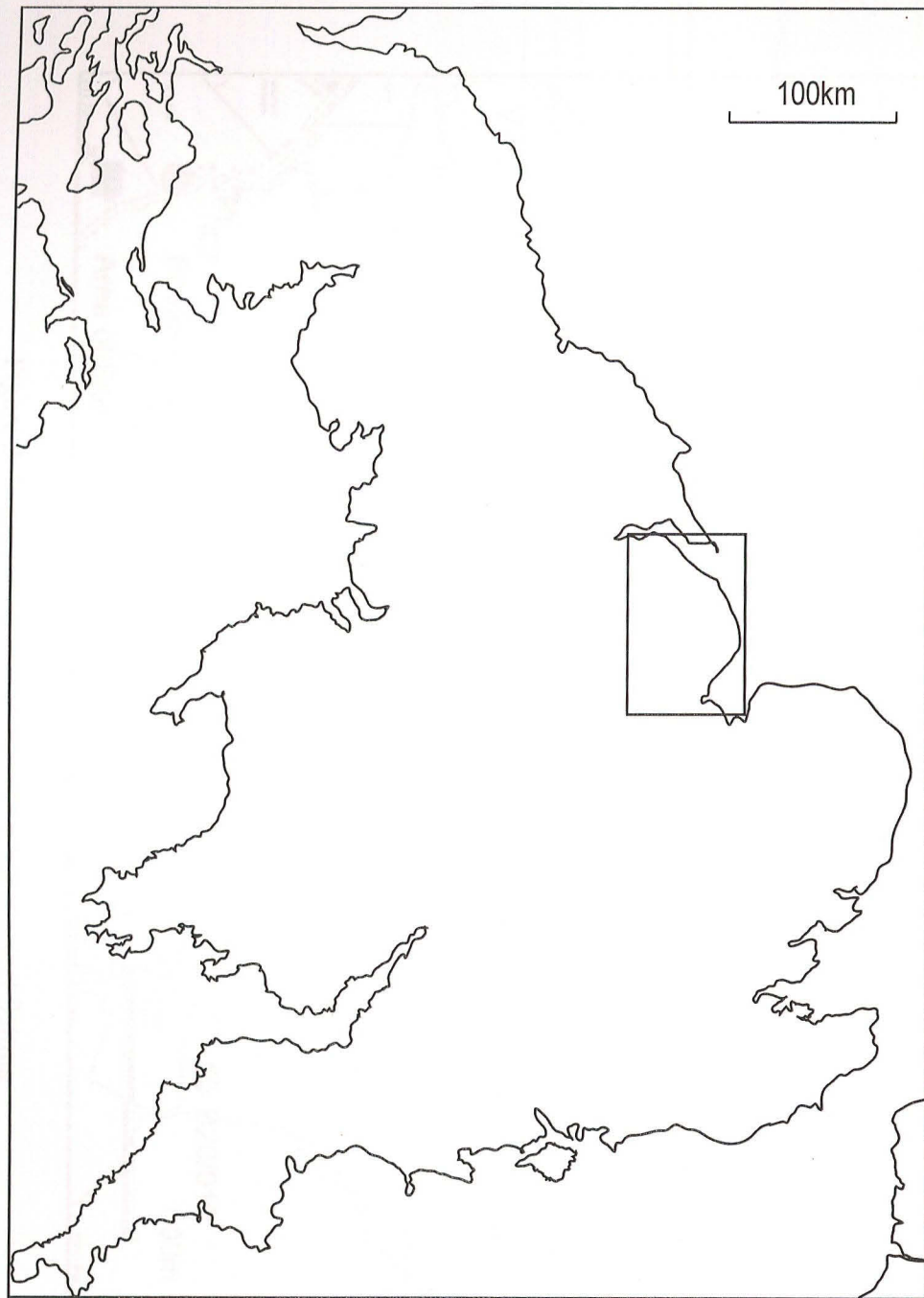


Figure 1: General Location Plan

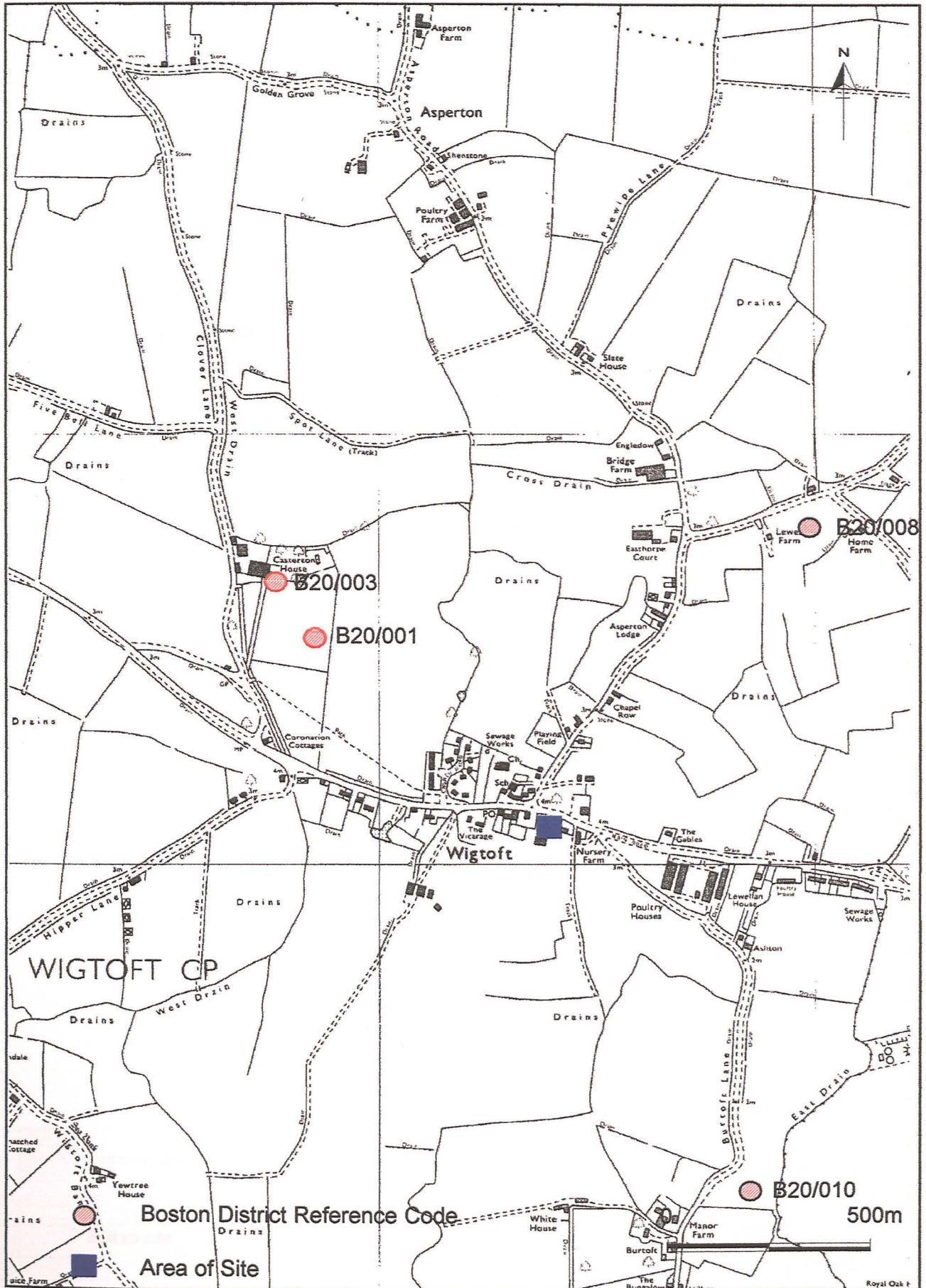


Figure 2: General Site Location and Archaeological Setting

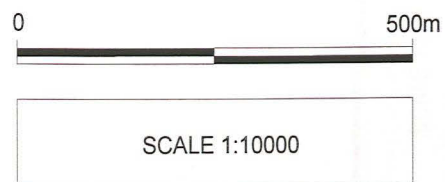
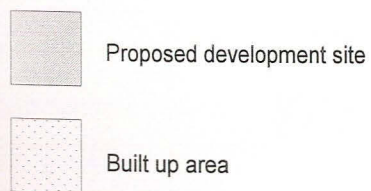
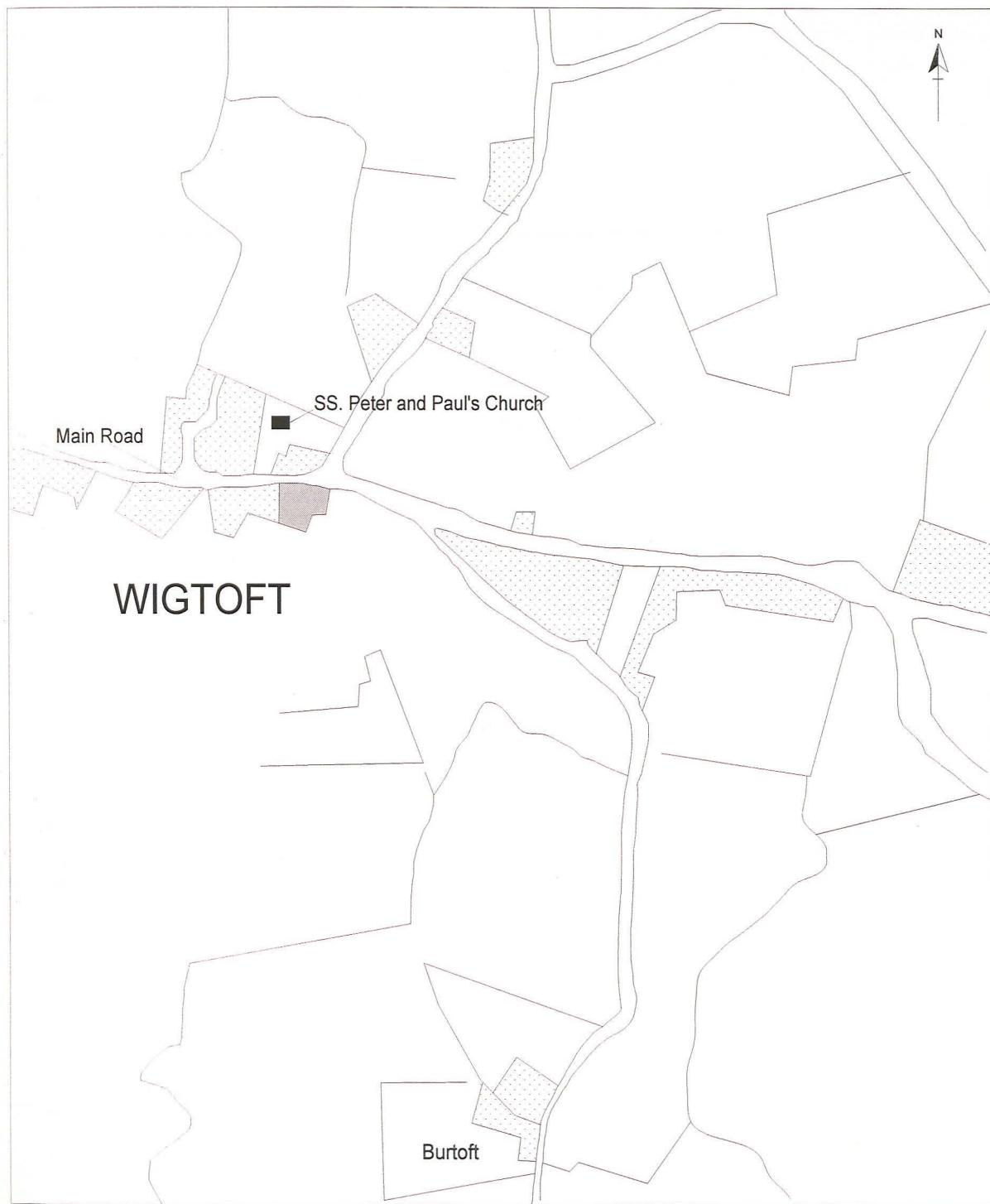


Figure 3: Site Location Plan

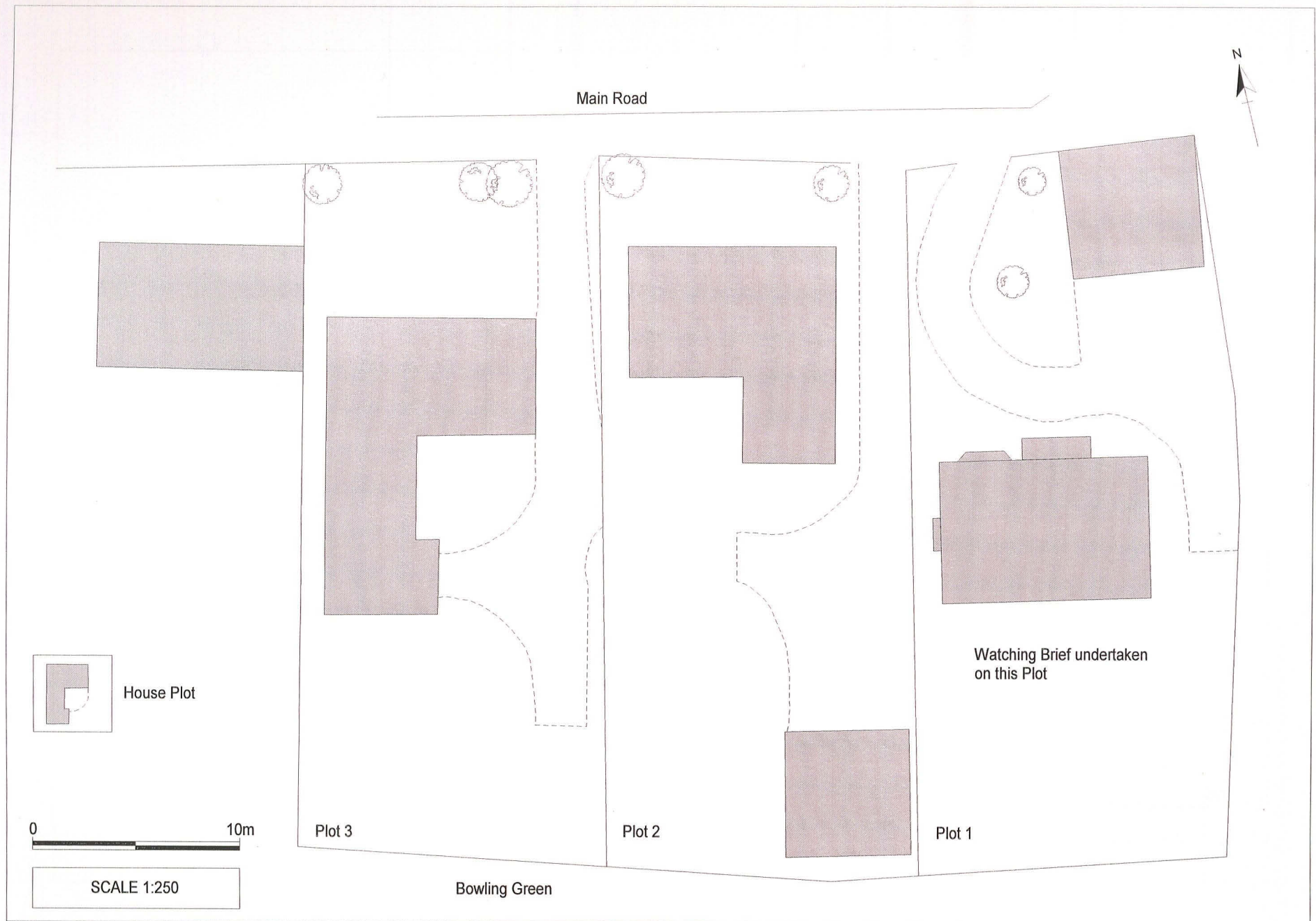


Figure 4: Plan of Development Site, showing all houses

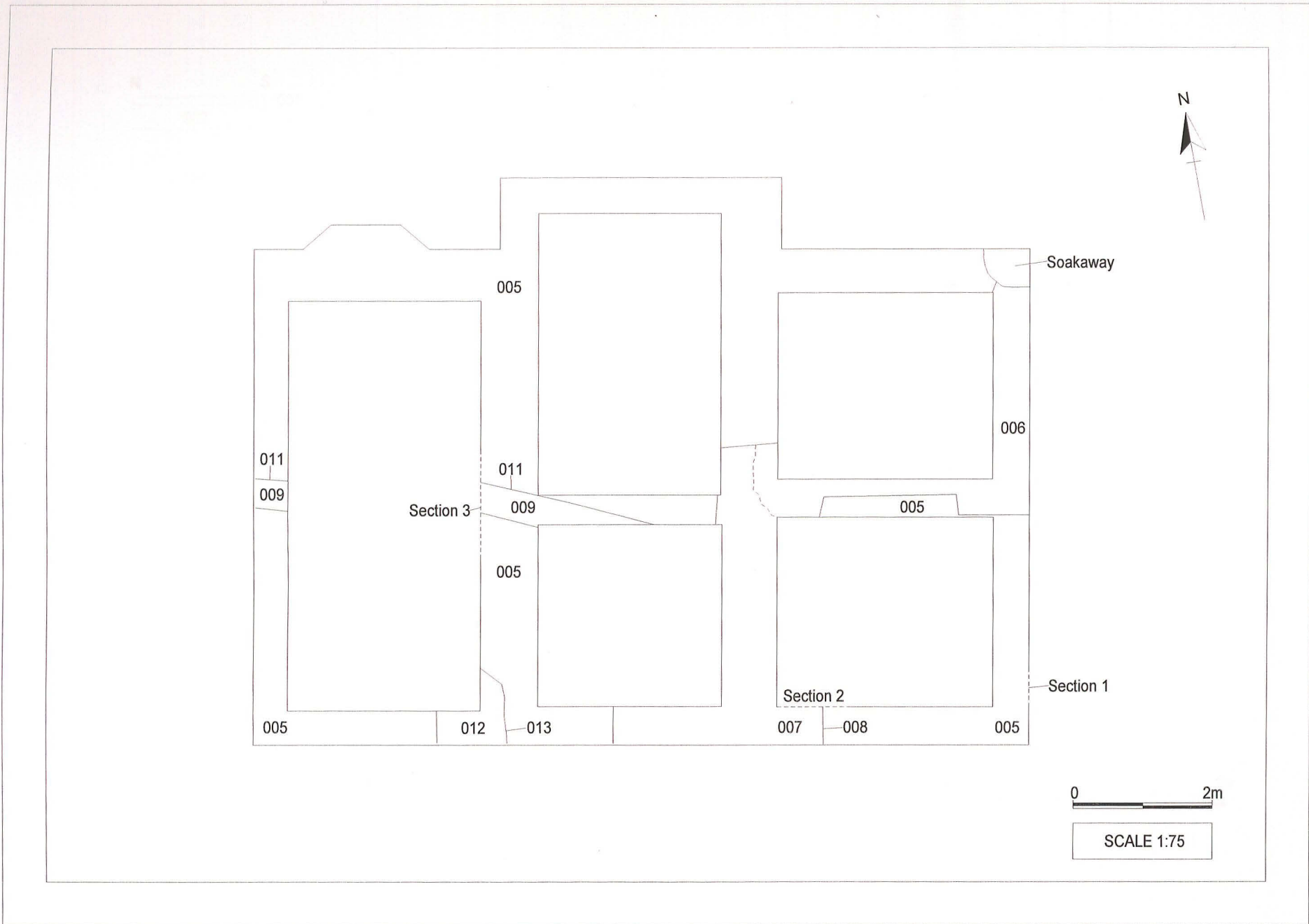
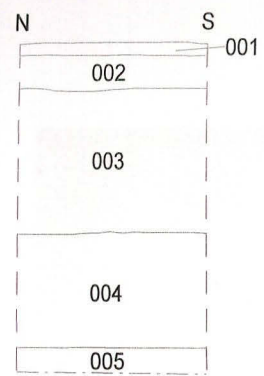
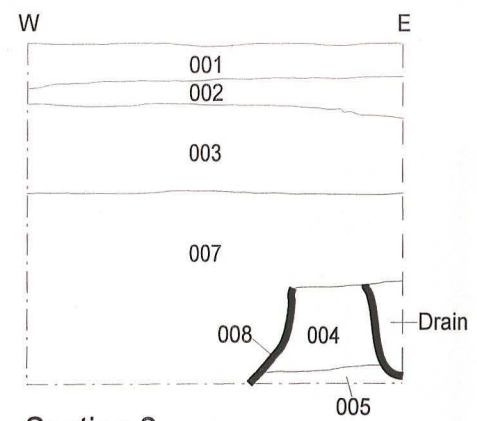


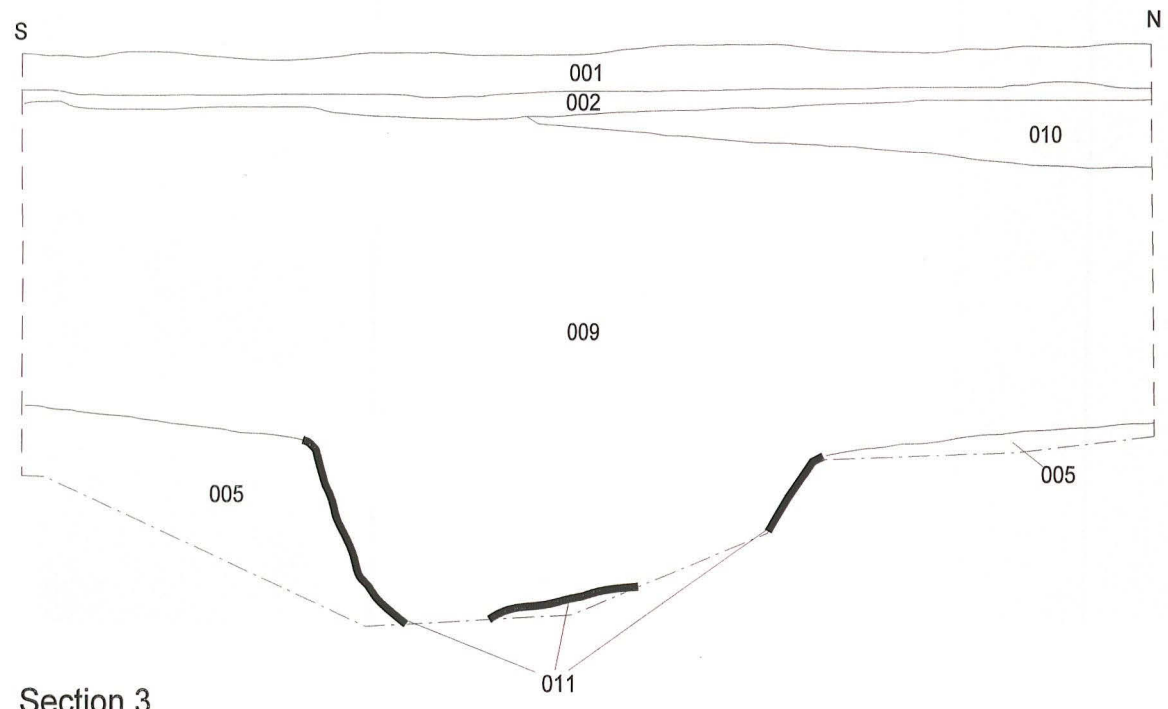
Figure 5: House Footings, showing features and sections



Section 1



Section 2



Section 3



SCALE 1:20

Figure 6: Sections 1 - 3



Plate 1 General view of the development area, looking north

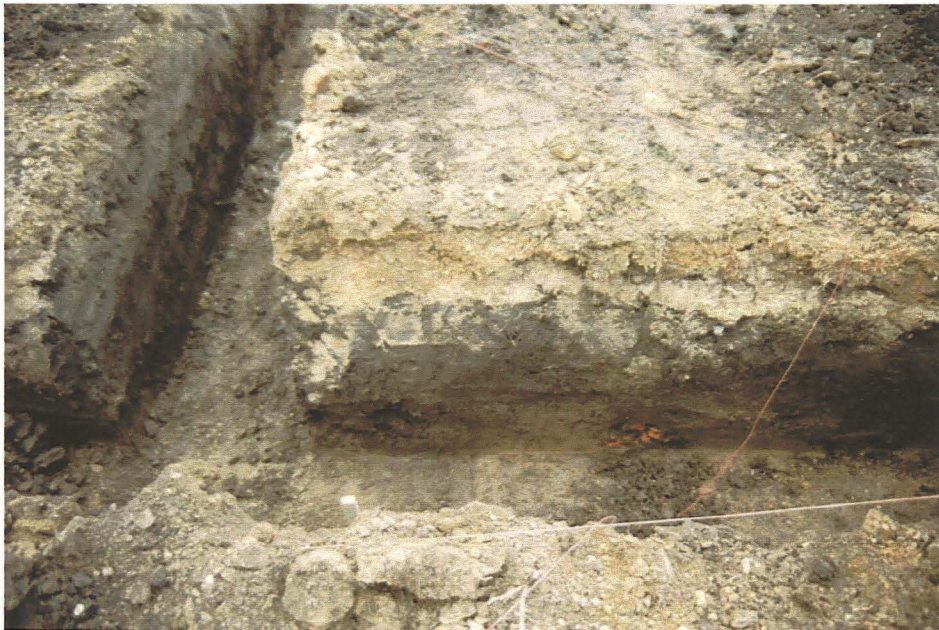


Plate 2 Section 2, showing the car park surface, buried topsoil, drainage ditch [008] and natural, looking north

Appendix 1
Context Summary

No.	Description	Interpretation	Fill of
001	Loose light to mid yellow sand and gravel, 0.12m thick	Car park surface	
002	Light greyish white stone and crushed stone, 0.14m thick	Hard core for 001	
003	Dark blackish brown silt, 0.38m thick	Buried topsoil	
004	Mid brown silt, 0.3m thick	Subsoil	
005	Moderately firm light to mid yellow sands and silts	Natural deposit	
006	Mid greyish brown silt	Dumped deposit	
007	Dark greyish brown silt, with brick and tile fragments	Drainage ditch fill	008
008	Linear cut, north-south turning east-west	Drainage ditch	
009	Dark greyish brown silt	Drainage ditch fill	011
010	Dark brownish black silt and ash	Dumped deposit	
011	Linear cut, 1.3m wide by 0.5m deep. Aligned east to west	Drainage ditch	
012	Dark blackish brown organic silt	Drainage ditch fill	013
013	Linear cut, 1.2m wide. Aligned north to south	Drainage ditch	

Appendix 2

The Finds by Hilary Healey

Provenance

The material is derived from only five stratified contexts.

Range

The range of material is detailed in the table.

Context	Description	Latest Date
+	1 white saltglaze sherd, 18 th century	Unstratified
	3 earthenware sherds, 19 th century	
	4 blue and white sherds, 19 th century	
	Glass bottle, 19 th century	
	1 pantile or drainpipe fragment	
	Glass marble, 19 th - 20 th century	
	Bottle stopper, marked 'War Grade', WWI or WWII	
	Bone disc, probable button to be covered in fabric, 19 th - 20 th century	
001	2 blue and white sherds	19 th century
	1 window glass, 1 bottle glass	
	1 brick fragment	
006	2 slipware sherds, 18 th century	19 th century
	1 black glazed sherd, 19 th century	
	1 saltglazed sherd, 19 th century	
	1 possible Stamford Ware sherd, 9 th - 12 th century	
	1 handmade brick fragment	
007	4 sherds of 1 brown glazed earthenware bowl	18 th century
	1 handmade brick fragment	
009	5 sherds of Staffordshire black glazed pancheon	18 th century
	3 sherds of Staffordshire brown glazed wares	
	1 white saltglazed	
	1 handmade brick fragment	
010	1 white glazed sherd	19 th century
	1 cream glazed sherd	
	1 blue and white sherd	

'+' = Unstratified

Condition

All the material is in good condition and presents no long term storage problems. The assemblage should be archived by material class.

Documentation

Artefact assemblages from throughout the county have previously been examined and reported.

Potential

The assemblage has little potential.

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.
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.
Saxon	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 410-1066 when England was largely settled by tribes from northern Germany
Medieval	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
Post-medieval	The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.

Appendix 4

The Archive

The archive consists of:

- 13 Context records
- 2 Scale drawings
- 1 Context record sheets
- 1 Section record sheet
- 1 Photographic record sheets
- 4 Daily record sheets
- 1 Box 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: 2000.152

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: WMR00

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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