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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
DURING DEVELOPMENT ON  
LAND AT SHERIDAN HOUSE,  
WITHAM ON THE HILL,  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
(WSH00)**



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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
DURING DEVELOPMENT ON  
LAND AT SHERIDAN HOUSE,  
WITHAM ON THE HILL,  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
(WSH00)**

Work Undertaken For  
Ross Thain & Co

March 2001

Report Compiled by  
James Snee BSc (Hons)

Planning Application No. S00/0737/82  
National Grid References: TF 054 164  
City and County Museum Accession No: LCNCC : 2000.288

A.P.S. Report No. 49/01



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## 1. SUMMARY

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during construction of an extension to Sheridan House, Witham on the Hill, Lincolnshire. The site lies close to the church and the core of the medieval village.*

*The investigations revealed a sequence of deposits probably associated with the construction of Sheridan House and the laying of services through the property.*

*No finds were recovered from this development.*

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Definition of a Watching Brief

A 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 on land or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed' (IFA 1997).

### 2.2 Planning Background

Between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2000 an archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks associated with the erection of an extension to Sheridan House, Witham on the Hill, Lincolnshire.

A planning application (S00/0737/82) was submitted to South Kesteven District Council for the construction of an extension to the house to form a garage and store. Permission was granted subject to a condition requiring a watching brief.

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Ross Thain & Co to

undertake the archaeological watching brief. The investigation was carried out in accordance with a specification produced by APS and approved by the South Kesteven Community Archaeologist (Appendix 1).

### 2.3 Topography and Geology

Witham on the Hill is situated 24km southeast of Grantham and 7km southwest of Bourne in South Kesteven District, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The development site is located at Sheridan house, on the eastern side of the village, at National Grid Reference TF 054 164 and lies at about 50m OD on land sloping down towards a small tributary of the East Glen River (Fig. 2).

Local soils are Elmton 3 Association calcareous fine loamy soils developed over limestone (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 180).

### 2.4 Archaeological Setting

Witham on the Hill lies in an area of known archaeological remains dating from the medieval period. In the Domesday Survey of c. 1086 the village is referred to as Witham. The name is Old English in origin although the meaning of the prefix is uncertain. It may derive from a personal name *Wit(t)a*, or possibly from the Old English word *wita* 'a councillor'. A third possibility is that the name derives from the Old English *wiht* 'a bend'. The second element is Old English; *ham* meaning 'a homestead, an estate' (Cameron 1998). Witham on the Hill was owned by Peterborough Abbey, Gilbert de Gand, Drew de beurre and Ralf Pagenel at the time of the survey and contained 244 acres of woodland, 108 acres of meadow as well as a church and watermill (Morris 1986).



Extant remains of the medieval period are represented by St. Andrews church dating from the 12<sup>th</sup> century (Pevsner & Harris 1989). Located within the churchyard are the base and part of the shaft of a 14<sup>th</sup> century cross. A further cross may once have been located 500m west of the church. To the southwest of the village, aerial photographs have revealed cropmarks that may indicate the position of moated enclosures.

Dating to the 16<sup>th</sup> century is Palace Farm, located north of the site. This building is thought to incorporate an earlier structure belonging to the Bishops of Lincoln (DoE 1987).

Previous archaeological investigations were undertaken during the laying of a pipeline through the village. This revealed former boundary walls and a ditch indicating changes in the layout of the village, as well as an undated stone drain and three pits (Cope-Faulkner 1996). To the northwest of the site, a watching brief at Manor Farm recorded two post medieval features, a pit and possible infilled well (Cope-Faulkner 2000).

### 3. AIMS

The aim of the watching brief, as set out in the specification (Appendix 1), was to record and interpret the archaeological features exposed during the excavation of foundation trenches and other areas of ground disturbance.

### 4. METHOD

Prior to the excavation of footings the site was stripped of topsoil and levelled. The strip footings were excavated by a machine to a depth of 1.5m using a toothed bucket.

The base and sides of the footing trenches were inspected and hand cleaned at intervals. The depth and thickness of each deposit was measured from the ground surface. Each deposit or feature was allocated a unique reference number (Context Number) with an individual written description. Sections were drawn at an appropriate scale and annotated sketch plans were produced. A photographic record was compiled, depicting the setting of the site and the nature of recorded features and deposits. The spoil from the excavations was searched using a trowel to recover finds that may assist in the interpretation of the site.

## 5. RESULTS

The records of deposits excavated during development were examined. A list of contexts appears as Appendix 2. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits

Phase 1	Natural Deposits
Phase 2	Undated Deposits
Phase 3	Modern Deposits

### 5.1 Phase 1: Natural Deposits

The earliest deposit recorded at the site was firm, mid bluish grey clay (009) which extended beyond the lower limit of excavation (Fig. 5, section 2).

### 5.2 Phase 2: Undated Deposits

Overlying clay layer (009) was *c.* 0.20m of firm dark brownish grey clayey silt (005 & 008) (Fig. 5) containing frequent roots, grass and straw fragments. Sealing this deposit was up to 0.30m of firm, mixed blueish and dark brown clay (004 & 007).



### 5.3 Phase 3: Modern Deposits

Cutting through mixed deposit (004 & 007) at the east end of the site was a north-south oriented service trench (013). Sealing this trench and overlying (004 & 007) (Fig. 5) was up to 0.40m of mixed, brownish grey silty clay (003) levelling material with frequent pebbles and stones.

In the west end of the footing (Fig. 5, section 2), clay layer (004 & 007) was cut by the foundation trench (011) for the east wall (012) of Sheridan House. This contained a mixed blue and brown clay infill (010).

Sealing levelling deposit (003) (Fig. 4) and foundation trench fill (010), was up to 0.30m of mixed, mid yellow clay (002 & 006) with common rounded stones and occasional brick fragments. Overlying this, and covering the entire site was c. 0.25m of dark brown clayey silt garden soil (001).

## 6. DISCUSSION

The earliest deposit (Phase 1) was probably a gleyed clay layer caused by the reducing effect of a high water table.

The undated (Phase 2) clayey silt (005 & 008) was probably a layer of topsoil buried by the raising of the ground level associated with the construction of Sheridan House and is likely to be modern. Overlying this was an undated levelling deposit (004 & 007) which was also probably modern.

The sequence of modern (Phase 3) features and deposits were related to the construction of Sheridan House, the laying of services through the property levelling the slope and raising the ground level. It is possible that garden soil (001) was imported into the site.

## 7. CONCLUSION

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during construction of an extension to Sheridan House, Witham on the Hill, Lincolnshire. The site lies close to the church and the core of the medieval village.

The investigations revealed a sequence of deposits probably associated with the construction of Sheridan House and the laying of services through the property.

No finds were recovered from this development.

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services would like to acknowledge the assistance of Ross Thain & Co who commissioned the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Steve Malone and this report was edited by Dale Trimble and Tom Lane. Gail Smith, the Community Archaeologist for South Kesteven District Council, kindly permitted examination of the relevant parish files.

## 9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Steve Malone  
Site Supervisors: Chris Moulis & Tobin Rayner  
Cad Illustration: James Snee  
Photographic Reproduction: Sue Unsworth  
Post Excavation Analyst: James Snee

## 10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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## 11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services

DoE Department of the Environment

IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists



Figure 1 General Location Plan.





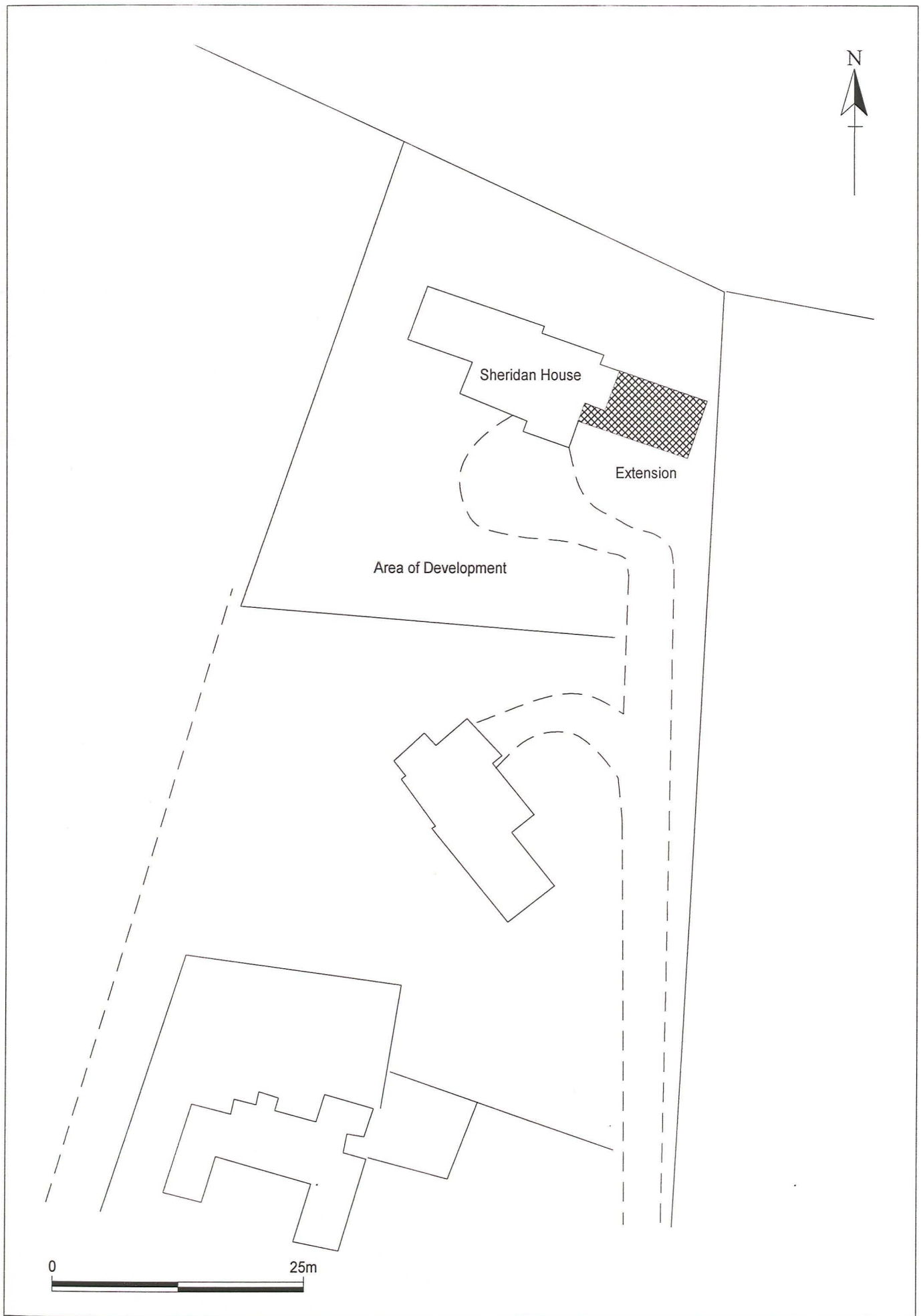


Figure 3 General Plan of the Development Area. Scale 1:500.



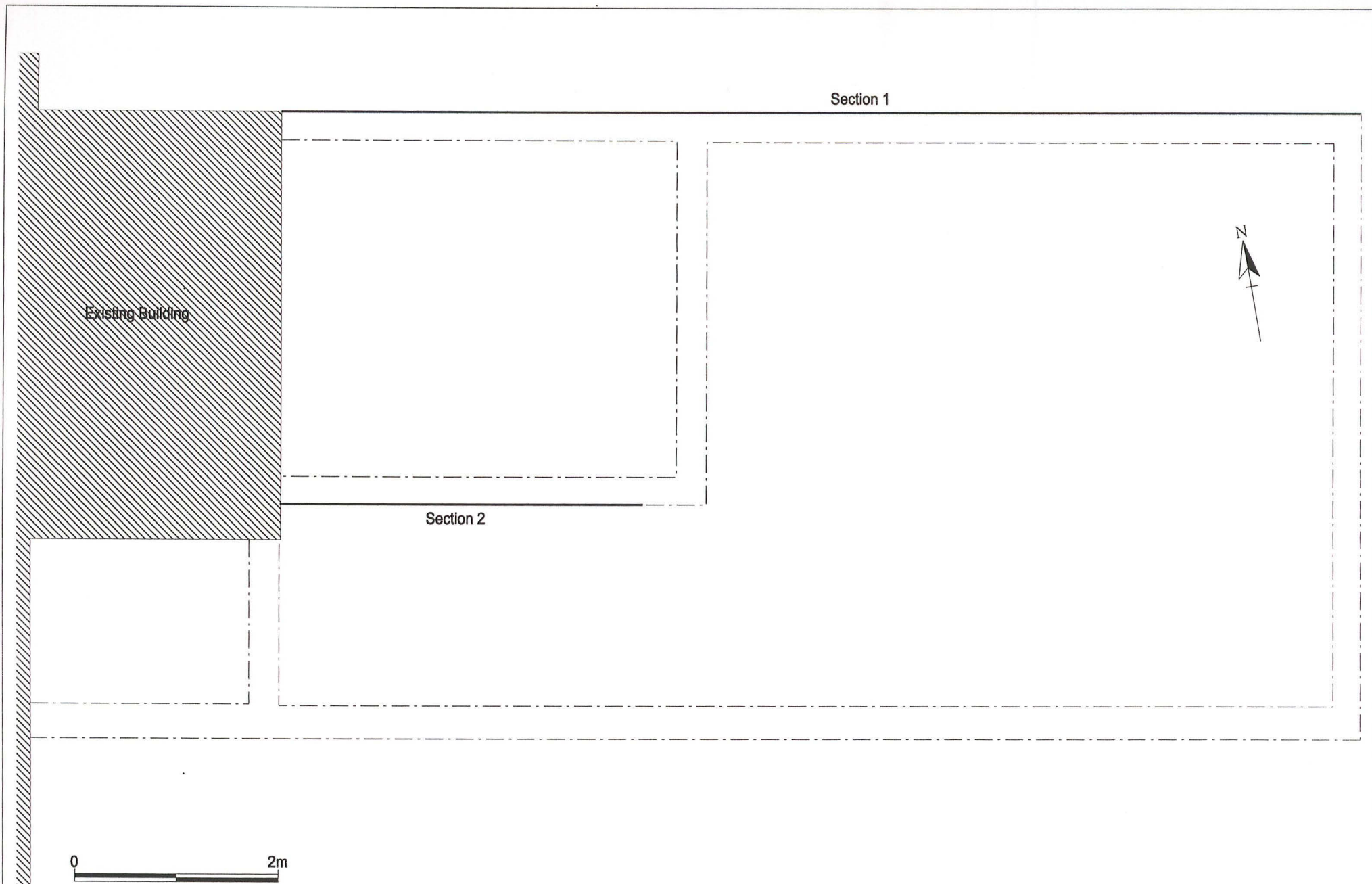


Figure 4 Plan of Footing Showing Section Locations. Scale 1:50.



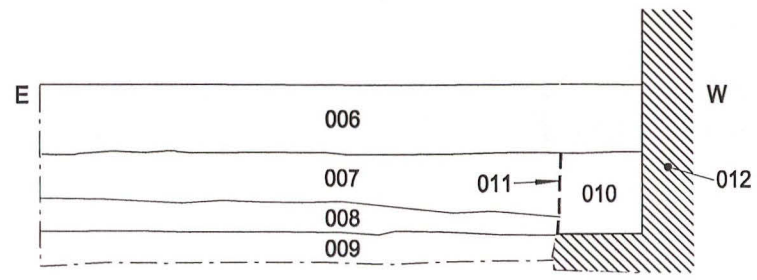
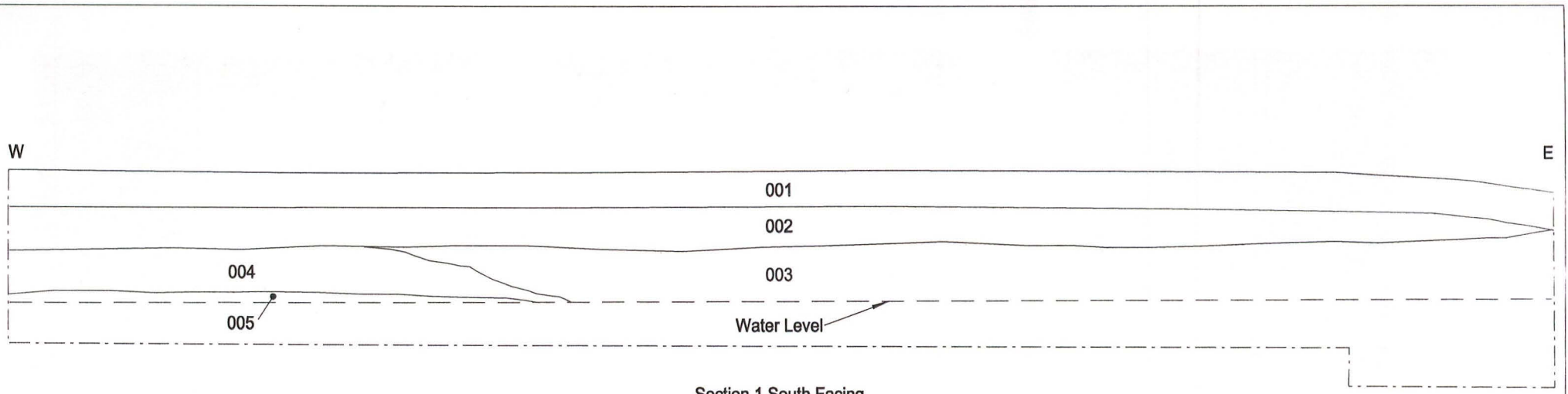


Figure 5 Sections 1 and 2. Scale 1:40.



Plate 1 General view of site during site strip, looking northwest.



Plate 2 Section 1 (soil profile), looking north.



Plate 3 Section 2 (soil profile), looking southwest.



**Appendix 1**

**LAND AT  
SHERIDAN HOUSE,  
WITHAM ON THE HILL,  
LINCOLNSHIRE**

**SPECIFICATION FOR  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**PREPARED FOR  
ROSS THAIN & CO.**

**BY  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT SERVICES  
Institute of Field Archaeologists'  
Registered Organisation No. 21**

**NOVEMBER 2000**



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## 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 *A watching brief is required during construction of an extension at Sheridan House, Witham on the Hill, Lincolnshire.*
- 1.2 *The area is archaeologically sensitive, close to the church and the core of the medieval village.*
- 1.3 *The watching brief will be undertaken during groundworks associated with the development. The archaeological features exposed will be recorded in writing, graphically and photographically.*
- 1.4 *On completion of the fieldwork a report will be prepared detailing the results of the investigation. The report will consist of a narrative supported by illustrations and photographs.*

## 2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This document comprises a specification for an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the construction of an extension, to form a garage and store, at Sheridan House, Witham on the Hill, Lincolnshire. The site is located at National Grid Reference TF 054 164.
- 2.2 This document contains the following parts:
  - 2.2.1 Overview.
  - 2.2.2 Stages of work and methodologies.
  - 2.2.3 List of specialists.
  - 2.2.4 Programme of works and staffing structure of the project

## 3 SITE LOCATION

- 3.1 Witham on the Hill is located 5km southwest of Bourne and 10km northeast of Stamford in the South Kesteven district of Lincolnshire. The works are to take place at Sheridan House, on the eastern side of the village, centred on National Grid Reference TF 054 164.

## 4 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 4.1 A planning application (S00/0737/82) was submitted to South Kesteven District Council for the construction of an extension to the house to form a garage and store. Permission is subject to a condition requiring the implementation of an archaeological watching brief during groundworks.

## 5 SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 5.1 The site lies at about 50m OD on land sloping down towards a small tributary of the East Glen River. Local soils are the Elmton 3 Association calcareous fine loamy soils developed over limestone (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 180).

## 6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 6.1 Witham on the Hill is mentioned in the Domesday Book implying a settlement at this location since at least the late Saxon period. A church is also mentioned in the Domesday entry, presumably a precursor to the extant St Andrew's, the earliest surviving fabric of which is Norman. The site lies towards the eastern edge of the present village, but not far from the church, and the focus of settlement may have shifted over time.

## 7 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 7.1 The aims of the watching brief will be:
- 7.1.1 To record and interpret the archaeological features exposed during the excavation of the foundation trenches and other areas of ground disturbance.
- 7.2 The objectives of the watching brief will be to:
- 7.2.1 Determine the form and function of the archaeological features encountered;
  - 7.2.2 Determine the spatial arrangement of the archaeological features encountered;
  - 7.2.3 As far as practicable, recover dating evidence from the archaeological features, and
  - 7.2.4 Establish the sequence of the archaeological remains present on the site.

## 8 SITE OPERATIONS

- 8.1 General considerations
- 8.1.1 All work will be undertaken following statutory Health and Safety requirements in operation at the time of the watching brief.
  - 8.1.2 The work will be undertaken according to the relevant codes of practise



issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), under the management of a Member of the institute (MIFA). Archaeological Project Services is IFA Registered Organisation No. 21.

- 8.1.3 Any and all artefacts found during the investigation and thought to be 'treasure', as defined by the Treasure Act 1996, will be removed from site to a secure store and promptly reported to the appropriate coroner's office.

## 8.2 Methodology

- 8.2.1 The watching brief will be undertaken during the ground works phase of development, and includes the archaeological monitoring of all phases of soil movement.

- 8.2.2 Stripped areas and trench sections will be observed regularly to identify and record archaeological features that are exposed and to record changes in the geological conditions. The section drawings of the trenches will be recorded at a scale of 1:10. Should features be recorded in plan these will be drawn at a scale of 1:20. Written descriptions detailing the nature of the deposits, features and fills encountered will be compiled on Archaeological Project Services pro-forma record sheets.

- 8.2.3 Any finds recovered will be bagged and labelled for later analysis.

- 8.2.4 Throughout the watching brief a photographic record will be compiled. The photographic record will consist of:

8.2.4.1 the site during work to show specific stages, and the layout of the archaeology within the trench.

8.2.4.2 groups of features where their relationship is important

- 8.2.5 Should human remains be located the appropriate Home Office licence will be obtained before their removal. In addition, the Local Environmental Health Department and the police will be informed.

## 9 POST-EXCAVATION

### 9.1 Stage 1

- 9.1.1 On completion of site operations, the records and schedules produced during the watching brief will be checked and ordered to ensure that they form a uniform sequence forming a level II archive. A stratigraphic matrix of the archaeological deposits and features present on the site will be prepared. All photographic material will be catalogued and labelled,

the labelling referring to schedules identifying the subject/s photographed.

- 9.1.2 All finds recovered during the field work will be washed, marked and packaged according to the deposit from which they were recovered. Any finds requiring specialist treatment and conservation will be sent to the Conservation Laboratory at the City and County Museum, Lincoln.

9.2 Stage 2

9.2.1 Detailed examination of the stratigraphic matrix to enable the determination of the various phases of activity on the site.

9.2.2 Finds will be sent to specialists for identification and dating.

9.3 Stage 3

9.3.1 On completion of stage 2, a report detailing the findings of the watching brief will be prepared.

9.3.2 This will consist of:

9.3.2.1 A non-technical summary of the results of the investigation.

9.3.2.2 A description of the archaeological setting of the watching brief.

9.3.2.3 Description of the topography of the site.

9.3.2.4 Description of the methodologies used during the watching brief.

9.3.2.5 A text describing the findings of the watching brief.

9.3.2.6 A consideration of the local, regional and national context of the watching brief findings.

9.3.2.7 Plans of the archaeological features exposed. If a sequence of archaeological deposits is encountered, separate plans for each phase will be produced.

9.3.2.8 Sections of the archaeological features.

9.3.2.9 Interpretation of the archaeological features exposed, and their chronology and setting within the surrounding



landscape.

9.3.2.10 Specialist reports on the finds from the site.

9.3.2.11 Appropriate photographs of the site and specific archaeological features.

## 10 REPORT DEPOSITION

10.1 Copies of the report will be sent to the client; the South Kesteven Community Archaeologist; South Kesteven District Council Planning Department; and to the County Council Archaeological Sites and Monuments Record.

## 11 ARCHIVE

11.1 The documentation and records generated during the watching brief will be sorted and ordered into the format acceptable to the City and County Museum, Lincoln. This will be undertaken following the requirements of the document titled Conditions for the Acceptance of Project Archives for long term storage and curation.

## 12 PUBLICATION

12.1 A report of the findings of the watching brief will be published in Heritage Lincolnshire's Annual Report and a note presented to the editor of the journal *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology*. If appropriate, notes on the findings will be submitted to the appropriate national journals: *Britannia* for discoveries of Roman date, and *Medieval Archaeology* and the *Journal of the Medieval Settlement Research Group* for findings of medieval or later date.

## 13 CURATORIAL RESPONSIBILITY

13.1 Curatorial responsibility for the archaeological work undertaken on the site lies with the South Kesteven Community Archaeologist. They will be given seven days notice in writing before the commencement of the project.

## 14 VARIATIONS

14.1 Variations to the proposed scheme of works will only be made following written confirmation of acceptance from the archaeological curator.

## 15 PROGRAMME OF WORKS AND STAFFING LEVELS

15.1 The watching brief will be integrated with the programme of construction and is



dependent on the developers' work programme. It is therefore not possible to specify the person-hours for the archaeological site work.

15.2 An archaeological supervisor with experience of watching briefs will undertake the work.

15.3 Post-excavation analysis and report production will be undertaken by the archaeological supervisor, or a post-excavation analyst as appropriate, with assistance from a finds supervisor, illustrator and external specialists. It is expected that each fieldwork day (equal to one person-day) will require a post-excavation day (equal to one-and-a-half person-days) for completion of the analysis and report. If the fieldwork lasts longer than about four days then there will be an economy of scale with the post-excavation analysis.

## 16 SPECIALISTS TO BE USED DURING THE PROJECT

16.1 The following organisations/persons will, in principle and if necessary, be used as subcontractors to provide the relevant specialist work and reports in respect of any objects or material recovered during the investigation that require their expert knowledge and input. Engagement of any particular specialist subcontractor is also dependent on their availability and ability to meet programming requirements.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Body to be undertaking the work</u>
Conservation	Conservation Laboratory, City and County Museum, Lincoln
Pottery Analysis	Prehistoric - Trent & Peak Archaeological Trust Roman - B Precious, Independent Specialist Anglo-Saxon - J Young, Independent Specialist Medieval and later - G. Taylor APS in consultation with H Healey, Independent Archaeologist
Non-pottery Artefacts	J Cowgill, Independent Specialist
Animal Bones	Environmental Archaeology Consultancy
Environmental Analysis	J Rackham, Independent Specialist
Human Remains Analysis	R Gowland, Independent Specialist

17 **INSURANCES**

- 17.1 Archaeological Project Services, as part of the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire, maintains Employers Liability Insurance of £10,000,000, together with Public and Products Liability insurances, each with indemnity of £5,000,000. Copies of insurance documentation can be supplied on request.

18 **COPYRIGHT**

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- 18.2 Licence will also be given to the archaeological curators to use the documentary archive for educational, public and research purposes.
- 18.3 In the case of non-satisfactory settlement of account then copyright will remain fully and exclusively with Archaeological Project Services. In these circumstances it will be an infringement under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 for the client to pass any report, partial report, or copy of same, to any third party. Reports submitted in good faith by Archaeological Project Services to any Planning Authority or archaeological curator will be removed from said planning Authority and/or archaeological curator. The Planning Authority and/or archaeological curator will be notified by Archaeological Project Services that the use of any such information previously supplied constitutes an infringement under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 and may result in legal action.
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19 **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Hodge, CAH, Burton, RGO, Corbett, WM, Evans, R, and Seale, RS, 1984 Soils and their use in Eastern England, Soil Survey of England and Wales 13

Specification: Version 1, 2nd November 2000



## Appendix 2

### Context Summary

Context Number	Section Number	Description	Interpretation
001	1	Soft, dark brown clayey silt, with occasional pebbles, 0.25m thick.	Garden soil.
002	1	Firm, mixed mid yellow (some blueish grey) clay, with common rounded stones and occasional brick fragments, up to 0.30m thick.	Levelling deposit.
003	1	Firm, mixed brownish grey (some yellowish brown) silty clay, with frequent pebbles and rounded stones, > 0.40m thick.	Levelling deposit.
004	1	Firm, mid blueish grey clay, with common pebbles, 0.28m thick.	Levelling deposit.
005	1	Firm, dark brownish grey clayey silt, frequent roots and grass/straw fragments, > 0.10m thick.	Buried topsoil.
006	2	Firm, mixed mid yellow (some blueish grey) clay, with common rounded stones and occasional brick fragments, up to 0.30m thick.	Levelling deposit.
007	2	Firm, mixed mid blueish grey clay (some brownish grey), some root disturbance, 0.30m thick.	Levelling deposit.
008	2	Firm, dark brownish grey clayey silt, frequent roots and grass/straw fragments, 0.20m thick.	Buried topsoil.
009	2	Firm, mid blueish grey clay, > 0.14m thick.	Natural.
010	2	Firm, mixed blue and brown clay, common brick fragments.	Fill of (011).
011	2	Linear cut, vertical side and flat base, > 0.44m wide and c. 0.44m thick.	Foundation trench for (012).
012	2	Standing Wall.	Sheridan House.



013		Linear cut, oriented north-south, > 1.50m deep, contains services and disturbed backfill.	Service trench.
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### Appendix 3

#### GLOSSARY

<b>Anglo-Saxon</b>	Pertaining to the period when Britain was occupied by peoples from northern Germany, Denmark and adjacent areas. The period dates from approximately AD 450-1066.
<b>Context</b>	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].
<b>Cut</b>	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.
<b>Domesday Survey</b>	A survey of property ownership in England compiled on the instruction of William I for taxation purposes in 1086 AD.
<b>Fill</b>	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) that become contained by the 'cut' are referred to as its fill(s).
<b>Layer</b>	A layer is a term used to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
<b>Medieval</b>	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
<b>Post-medieval</b>	The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.
<b>Prehistoric</b>	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.
<b>Romano-British</b>	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.
<b>Saxon</b>	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 410-1066 when England was largely settled by tribes from northern Germany.

## Appendix 4

### THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

13	-	Context records
1	-	Photographic record sheets
1	-	Drawing sheets
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: LCNCC : 2000.288

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: WSH00

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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