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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
ON BOREHOLES AT  
1 MARKET PLACE AND  
18-19 BRIDGE STREET,  
SPALDING,  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
(SBS01)**



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1 MARKET PLACE AND  
18-19 BRIDGE STREET,  
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LINCOLNSHIRE  
(SBS01)**

Work Undertaken For  
Le Sage Associates

Report Compiled by  
Gary Taylor BA(Hons) MA

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## 1. SUMMARY

*A watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of boreholes on land at 1 Market Place and 18-19 Bridge Street, Spalding, Lincolnshire. Previous archaeological investigations at the site had revealed medieval and post-medieval remains, including burials probably associated with medieval Spalding Priory.*

*Two boreholes were excavated, one in the yard to the rear of the site and one below the cellar at the street frontage. Probable dumped deposits of post-medieval date were revealed to 2.2m below ground surface in the yard. Beneath this were probable alluvial layers to a depth of 5.1m below ground level. Deposits below about 3.1m depth in the yard were wet or waterlogged.*

*In the cellar, under the evaluation trench backfill, was a sequence of alluvial deposits to a depth of 5.2m below the cellar floor. These were wet or waterlogged and there was a layer containing organic matter between 1.98m-2.40m below the cellar floor. This may represent a marshy former ground surface or could be the fill of a channel or man-made gully.*

*Animal bone and a 17th-18th century wig curler were recovered from the topsoil in the yard.*

## 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 or site, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or

*destroyed*' (IFA 1997).

### 2.2 Planning Background

A watching brief was undertaken on 10<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> July 2001 during the excavations of boreholes on land at 1 Market Place and 18/19 Bridge Street, Spalding, Lincolnshire.

The archaeological recording was commissioned by Le Sage Associates and carried out by Archaeological Project Services in accordance with the requirements of the Archaeological Officer for Lincolnshire County Council.

### 2.3 Site Location

Spalding lies 23km southwest of Boston and 30km southeast of Sleaford in the administrative district of South Holland, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The investigation site is located in Spalding town centre at 1 Market Place and 18/19 Bridge Street, national grid reference TF 2480 2259, and lies at approximately 7m OD near the highest point of the town core (Figs 2 and 3). Two boreholes were excavated and recorded at the site. Borehole A was located in the cellar of 18 Bridge Street, and was positioned in the area of the backfilled evaluation trench A. The second borehole (C) was located in the yard to the rear of 18/19 Bridge Street and was positioned a little outside the southwest corner of evaluation trench C (Fig. 4).

### 2.4 Archaeological Setting

Previous archaeological investigations at the site revealed medieval and later remains. Beneath the cellars of the present buildings were burials, almost certainly part of the cemetery of medieval Spalding Priory. Limestone walls were also revealed beneath the cellars and one of these, associated with

a possible ditch, may represent the priory precinct boundary.

Post-medieval ditches, pits and dumped deposits were also encountered beneath the cellars and in the yard to the rear of the site. These post-medieval remains were at least 2m deep below the present ground surface and represented general occupation activity with evidence of intermittent flooding. Other than the medieval limestone walls, no distinct structural evidence of medieval or post-medieval date was encountered. It is thought that such remains were located in the area of, and removed by, the cellars (Cope-Faulkner 2000).

### 3. AIMS

The aim of the archaeological investigation was to record deposits encountered during the borehole excavation and, if possible to recoverer dating or functional evidence.

### 4. METHODS

The boreholes were mechanically excavated. Each identified deposit within the boreholes was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. The depth of each deposit was measured from the ground surface and these ground surface heights correlated with those determined during the previous archaeological evaluation of the site. A colour slide photographic record was compiled and sections were recorded at a scale of 1:10 (Fig. 5).

Records of the deposits recognised during the investigation were examined. A list of all contexts and interpretations appears as Appendix 1. Where possible, deposits identified during this investigation were correlated with those recorded during the

previous archaeological evaluation at the site. Recovered finds were also briefly described (Appendix 2).

Archaeological contexts are described below. The numbers shown in round brackets () are the context numbers assigned in the field. Those in square brackets [] are contexts numbers allotted during the previous evaluation of the site.

## 5. RESULTS

Descriptions and depths of deposits encountered in the two boreholes are provided in Appendix 1 and their sequence is shown on Figure 5. A summary of the results is given below.

### Borehole A

Excavated in the cellar of 18 Bridge Street at the street frontage of the site and located in the area of the backfilled evaluation trench. Top of borehole at approximately 4.4m OD. Depth of borehole 5.3m, base at approximately 0.9m below OD.

The top 1.1m of mixed deposits (008) are the backfill of the former evaluation trench. Beneath this, to a depth of 1.4m, was a brown sandy silt (009). Probably an alluvial deposit, this is perhaps identifiable with deposits [014] and/or [109] recorded as natural layers during the previous evaluation. Deposit (009) was very wet.

Below (009) were deposits of grey silty clay (010), yellow-brown silt (011) and brown sandy silt (012). These are all considered to be probably alluvial and extended to 1.98m below the surface. Layer (011) is possibly identifiable with deposits [115] or [116] recorded in the evaluation.

Beneath (012) was a brown sandy silt with organic matter, possibly decayed wood

fragments or peat (013). Extending to 2.40m below the surface, this may be a marshy former ground level or perhaps the fill of natural channel or man-made gully/ditch. The deposit is possibly equivalent to [111] and/or [113] identified in the evaluation, though organic matter was not recorded in those layers. This, however, may be due to deposits [111] and [113] only being observed at the bases of the auger sequence in a 2cm wide column. The presence of the vegetable/plant matter indicates that organic remains are preserved at depth due to waterlogging.

Underlying (013) was a sequence of clays, silts and sands (014-019) that extended to 5.20m below the surface. These are all considered to be alluvial in origin. At a depth of 3.30-3.50m below the surface, between deposits (015) and (016), was a void. A further void was encountered below deposit (019) between 5.20-5.30m below the surface and was very wet. The cause of the void between (015) and (016) is unknown though that below (019) probably resulted from the extremely wet conditions, with the deposits here at the base of the borehole being washed out of the auger end by the ground water.

Several of the deposits below the uppermost layer, the evaluation trench backfill (008), were wet or waterlogged.

#### Borehole C

Excavated in the yard to the rear of the site, with ground surface at approximately 7.3m OD. Depth of borehole 5.1m, base at approximately 2.2m OD.

Beneath the current topsoil (001), from which animal bone fragments and a post-medieval wig curler were recovered, was a layer of mixed sandy silt identified as a dumped deposit (002). This is probably equivalent to similar dumped deposits [029]/[030] identified during the earlier

evaluation at the site and there dated to the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Cope-Faulkner 2000).

Below layer (002) was a void to a depth of 1.8m below ground level. It is not clear if this was an actual void below ground or caused by loose fill falling out of the auger. Beneath this void was a further mixed sandy silt (003), also dumped material, to 2.2m below ground.

Underlying (003) was a light brown silty sandy clay (004) that may be dumped or alluvium. This is perhaps identifiable with deposit [099] revealed in the evaluation and of post-medieval date.

Below (004) was a yellow-brown silty sand with occasional gravel (005) which is perhaps an alluvial deposit. Beneath this, from 3.1m to 5.1m below ground level, were light brown silty deposits (006) and (007), identified as alluvium. These deposits were wet/waterlogged.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological monitoring of boreholes at 1 Market Place and 18-19 Bridge Street, Spalding was undertaken to establish the sequence of deposits at the site. This was to assist development proposals and inform archaeological mitigation strategies as remains of medieval and later date, including part of the cemetery of Spalding Priory, had previously been found at the site.

A borehole in the yard to the rear of the site went through approximately 2.2m depth of dumped deposits that appear to be equivalent to post-medieval layers previously identified at the site. Below these were probable alluvial deposits to a depth of 5.1m below ground surface. Ground water was evident from about 3m below ground



level.

The second borehole was dug through the floor of a cellar at the street frontage and therefore commenced almost 3m lower than the first borehole. This borehole passed through approximately 1.1m depth of backfill in the previous archaeological trench and then encountered a sequence of probable alluvial deposits to a depth of 5.2m below the surface. Most of these alluvial deposits were wet or waterlogged, resulting in organic preservation. Between 2m and 2.4m below the surface a deposit containing organic matter was revealed and may be a former marshy ground surface or possibly the fill of a channel or gully.

No evidence of burials, as previously identified at the site, or any distinct structural remains were encountered during the monitoring.

## 7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wish to acknowledge the assistance of Mr S. Le Sage of Le Sage Associates who commissioned the investigation. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor and this report was edited by Tom Lane.

## 8. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Gary Taylor  
Supervisors: Denise Buckley, Paul Cope-Faulkner, Rachael Hall  
Finds Processing: Denise Buckley  
Illustration: Tobin Rayner  
Post-excavation Analyst: Gary Taylor

## 9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cope-Faulkner, P., 2000 *Archaeological*

*Evaluation on Land at 18/19 Bridge Street and 1 Market Place, Spalding, Lincolnshire (SPBS00)*, unpublished APS report 89/00

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

## 10. ABBREVIATIONS

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| APS | Archaeological Project Services                          |
| IFA | Institute of Field Archaeologists                        |
| OD  | Ordnance Datum: height of sea level at Newlyn, Cornwall. |

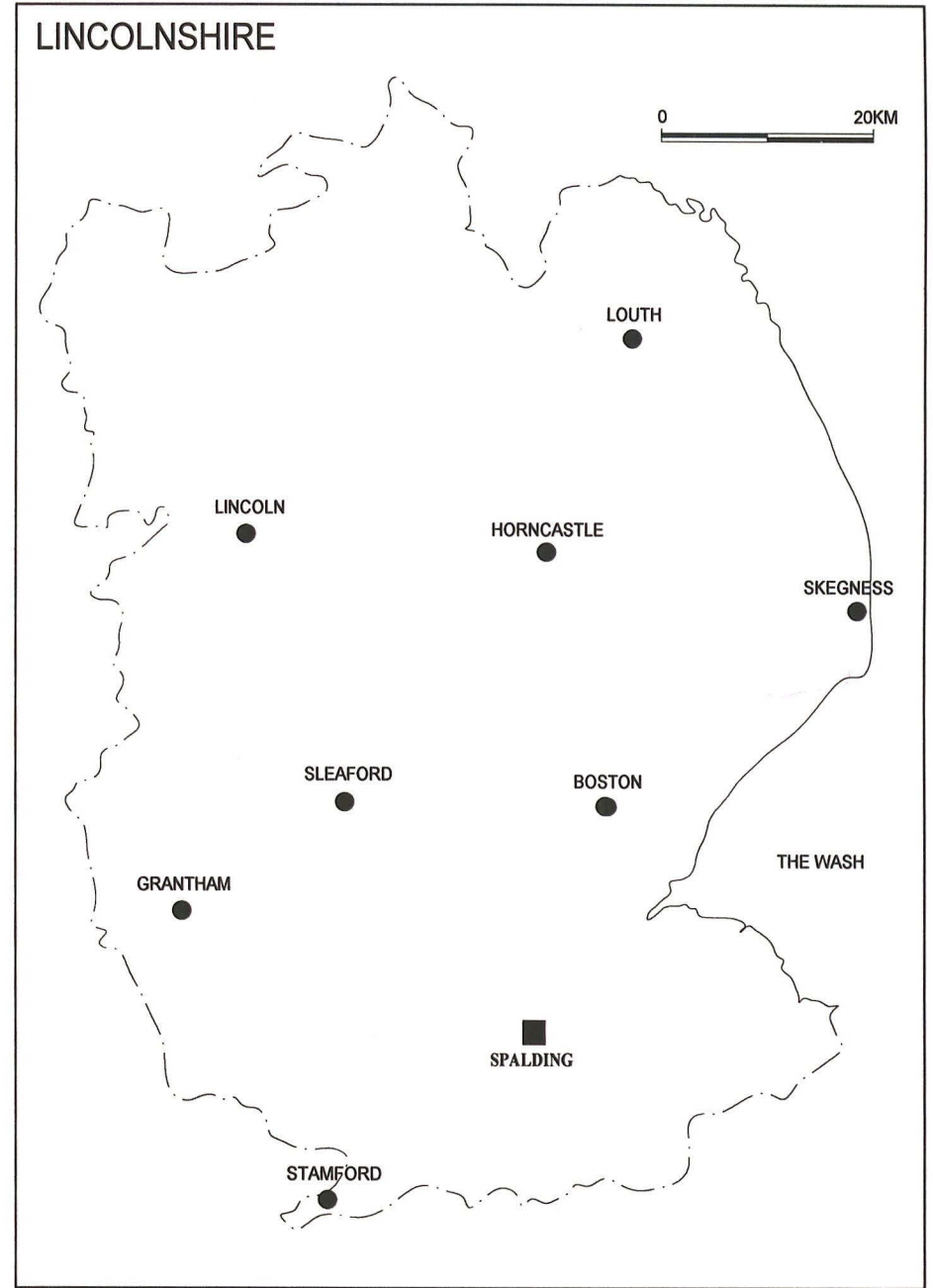
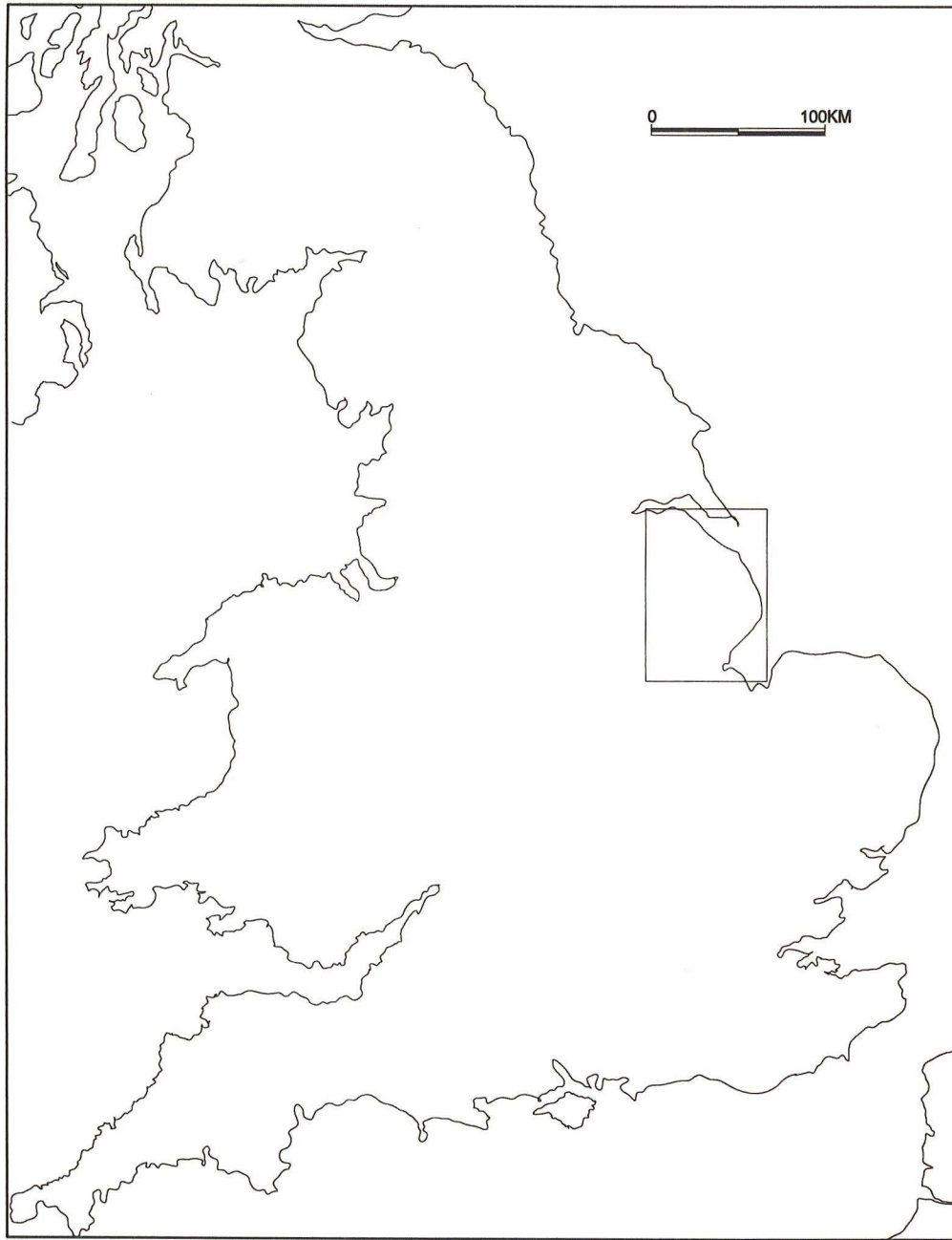


Figure 1 - General location map

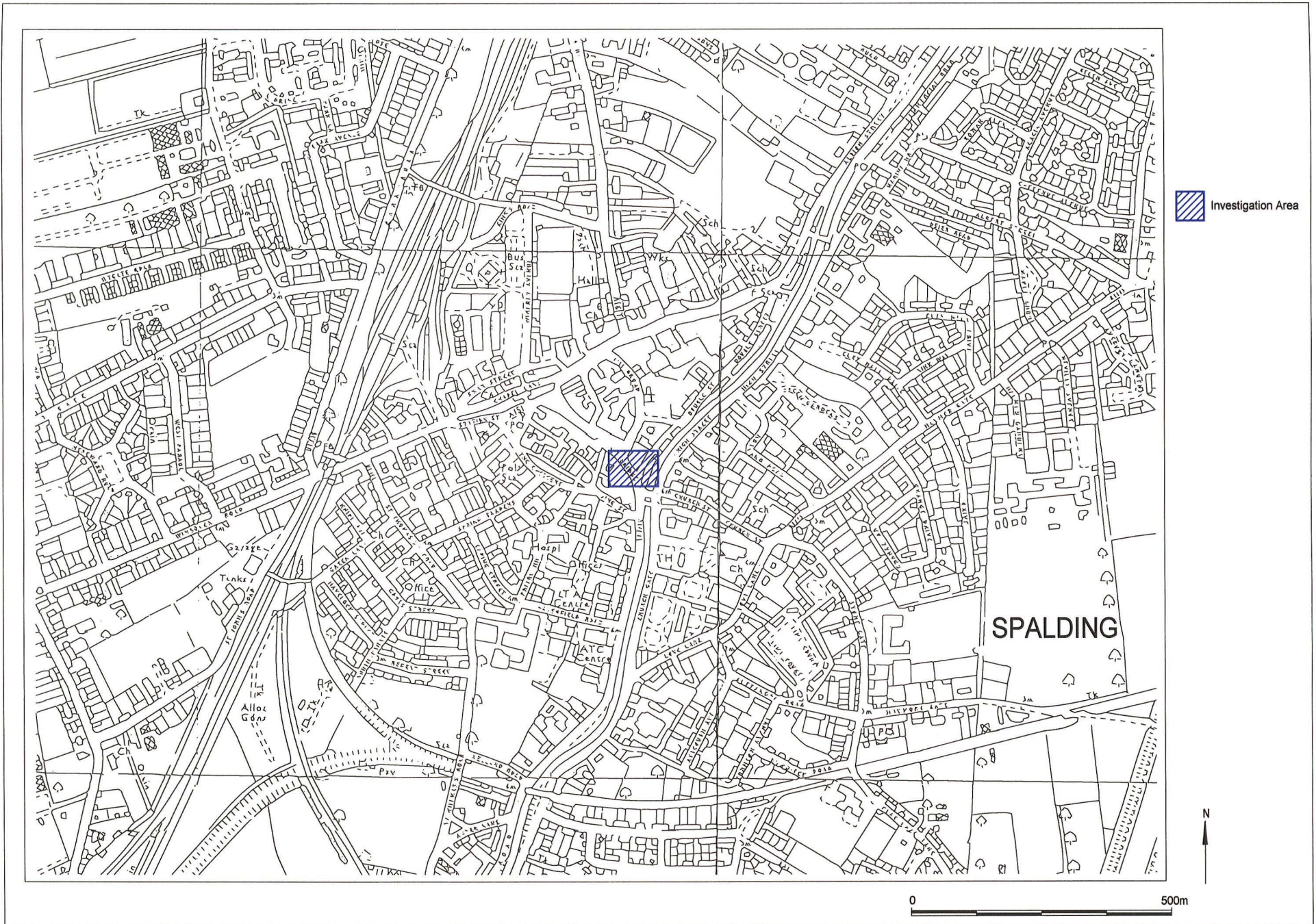
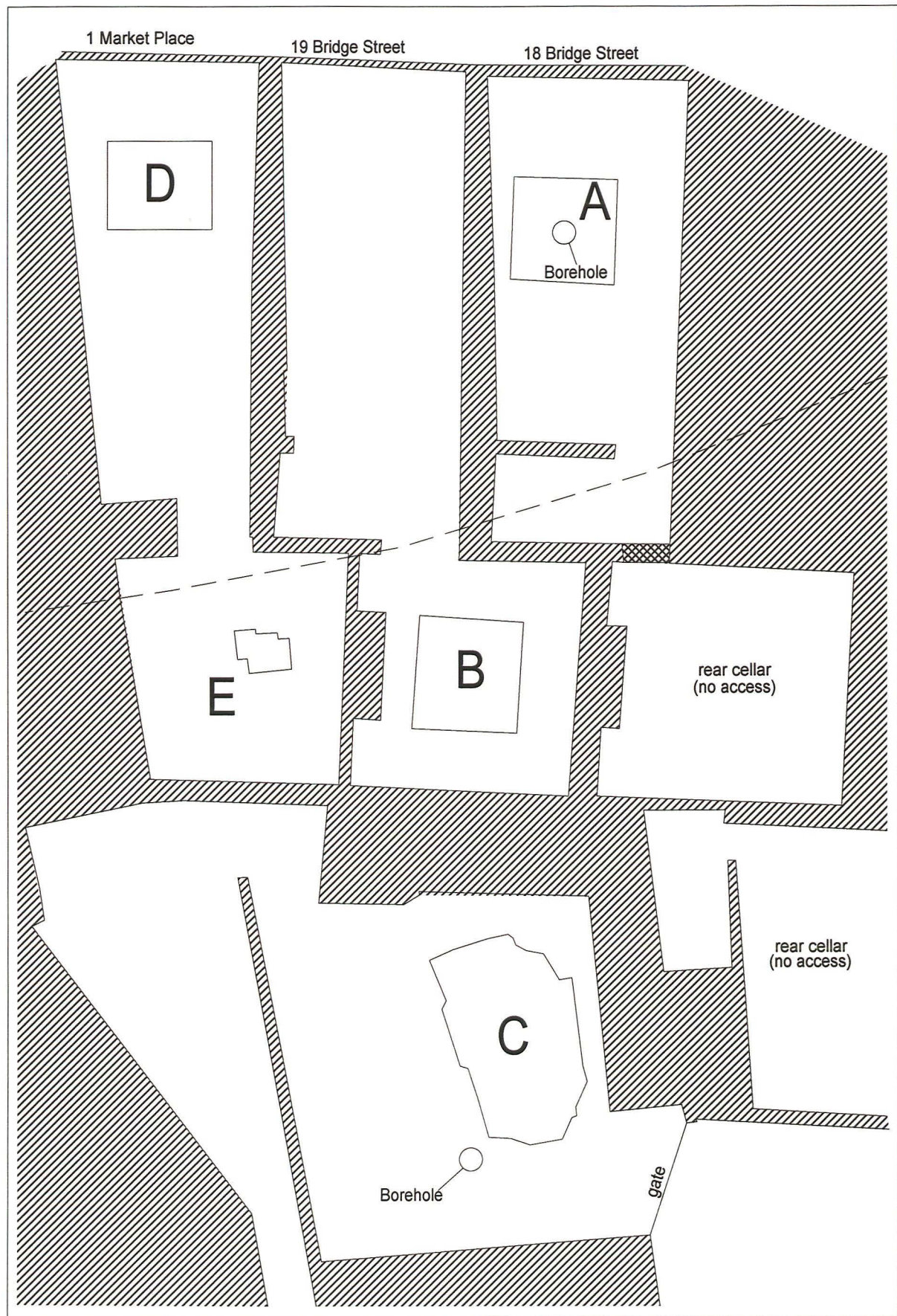


Figure 2 - Site Location Plan



Figure 3 - Proposed Development Area



0 5m

--- Possible course of precinct wall

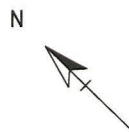


Figure 4 - Plan Showing Evaluation Trench Locations (A - E) and Borehole Positions

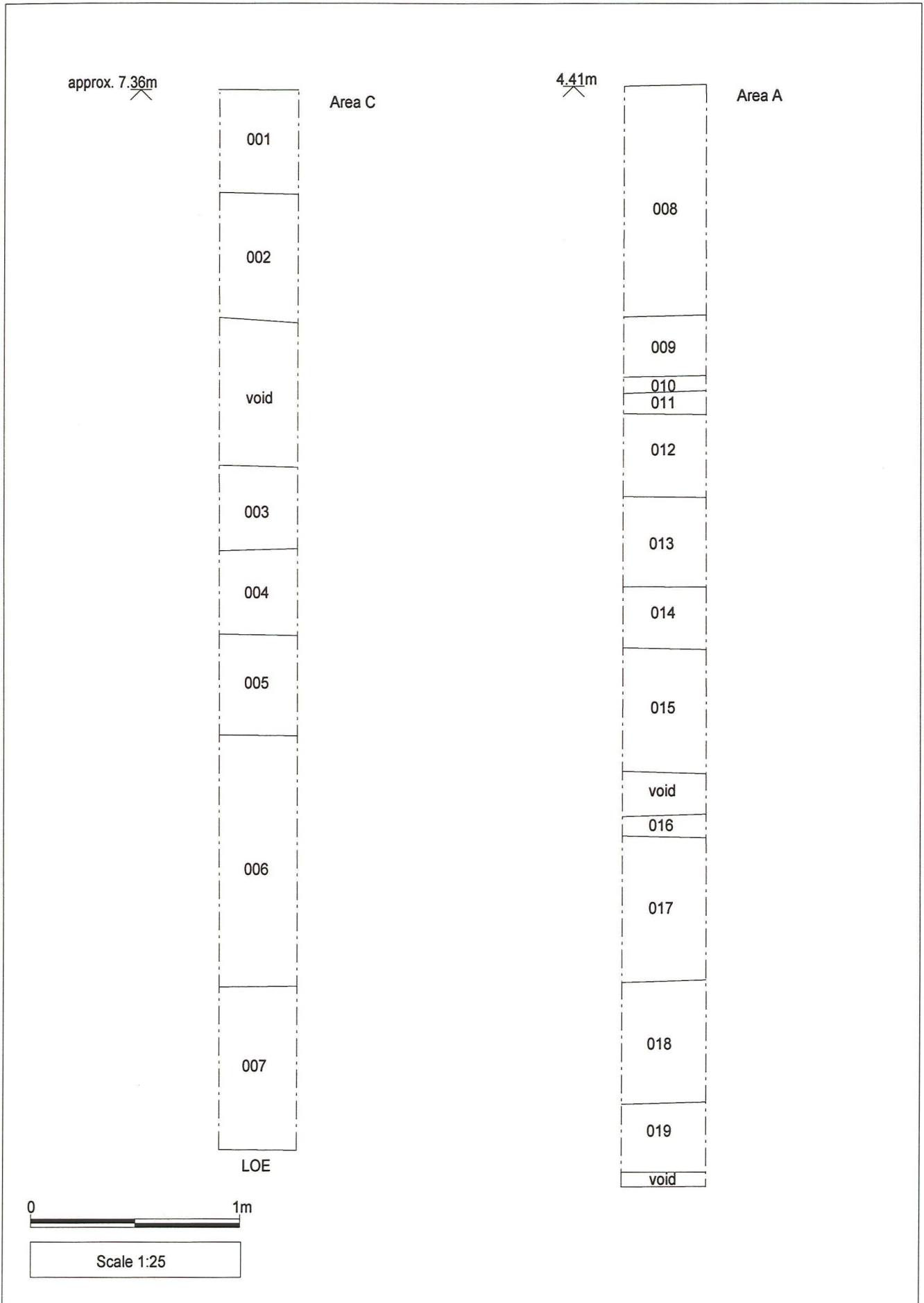


Figure 5: Sections of boreholes in Areas C and A

## Appendix 1

### CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

| Context No. | Borehole (Area) | Depth below ground surface | Description   | Interpretation  |
|-------------|-----------------|----------------------------|---|---|
| 001         | C               | 0-0.5m                     | Topsoil. Contains animal bone fragments and pipe clay wig curler of probable 17 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup> century date. | Topsoil   |
| 002         | C               | 0.5-1.1m                   | Dark grey-brown slightly sandy silt with frequent stones, brick/tile, mortar, charcoal and fire residues                      | Dumped deposit/made ground; probably equivalent to contexts 029/030 in evaluation                     |
|             | C               | 1.1-1.8m                   | Void  |   |
| 003         | C               | 1.8-2.2m                   | Dark brown sandy silt with occasional gravel and brick/tile   | Dumped deposit/made ground  |
| 004         | C               | 2.2-2.6m                   | Light brown silty sandy clay  | Dumped deposit?<br>Alluvial deposit?<br>Possibly equivalent to context 099 in evaluation              |
| 005         | C               | 2.6-3.1m                   | Light yellow-brown silty sand with occasional fine gravel   | Alluvial deposit?   |
| 006         | C               | 3.1-4.3m                   | Mid yellow-brown silty sand, very wet   | Alluvial deposit  |
| 007         | C               | 4.3-5.1m                   | Light brown silty sandy clay  | Alluvial deposit  |
| 008         | A               | 0-1.1m                     | Mixed backfill of archaeological trench   | Trench backfill   |
| 009         | A               | 1.1-1.4m                   | Mid brown sandy silt, very wet  | ?Alluvial deposit; possibly equivalent to contexts 014 and/or 109 in evaluation                       |
| 010         | A               | 1.4-1.48m                  | Dark-mid grey silty clay  | ?Alluvial deposit   |
| 011         | A               | 1.48-1.58m                 | Mid yellowish brown silt  | Alluvial deposit; possibly equivalent to context 115 or 116 in evaluation                             |
| 012         | A               | 1.58-1.98m                 | Mid-dark brown sandy silt   | Alluvial deposit  |
| 013         | A               | 1.98-2.40m                 | Brown sandy silt with occasional decayed wood fragments, peaty?   | ?Alluvial deposit/former ground surface? Possibly equivalent to contexts 111 and/or 113 in evaluation |
| 014         | A               | 2.40-2.70m                 | Grey silty clay   | Alluvial deposit  |

| Context No. | Borehole (Area) | Depth below ground surface | Description  | Interpretation   |
|-------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--|------------------|
| 015         | A               | 2.70-3.30m                 | Firm grey clay with brown mottles, becoming softer and slightly silty towards base | Alluvial deposit |
|             | A               | 3.30-3.50m                 | Void   |                  |
| 016         | A               | 3.50-3.60m                 | Silt/running silt, very wet  | Alluvial deposit |
| 017         | A               | 3.60-4.30m                 | Soft, brownish grey fine sand  | Alluvial deposit |
| 018         | A               | 4.40-4.90m                 | Soft, brownish grey medium-coarse sand   | Alluvial deposit |
| 019         | A               | 4.90-5.20m                 | Compact, grey mottled with brown coarse sand                                       | Alluvial deposit |
|             | A               | 5.20-5.30m                 | Void, very wet   |                  |

## Appendix 2

### THE FINDS by Gary Taylor

Two small fragments of sheep-sized animal bone were recovered from the topsoil (001) in Borehole C. Additionally, a complete pipe clay wig curler was retrieved from this deposit. This wig curler is 62mm long and 13mm in diameter at its terminals. One end is flattened and the other slightly concave. Impressions of fabric, straw or wood grain are evident on this concave terminal. The piece is crudely made, which might suggest local manufacture, and is likely to date to the 17th-18th century.



## Appendix 3

### GLOSSARY

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <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 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). |
| <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) which become contained by the 'cut' are referred to as its fill(s).  |
| <b>Layer</b>         | A layer is 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>Natural</b>       | Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity.  |
| <b>Post-medieval</b> | The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.   |

## Appendix 4

### THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

- 2 Day Record sheets, with details of 19 contexts
- 1 Sheet of scale drawings
- 1 Photographic record sheet
- 2 Stratigraphic matrices
- 2 Bags 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 Museum Accession Number: LCNCC : 2000.99

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: SBS01

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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