

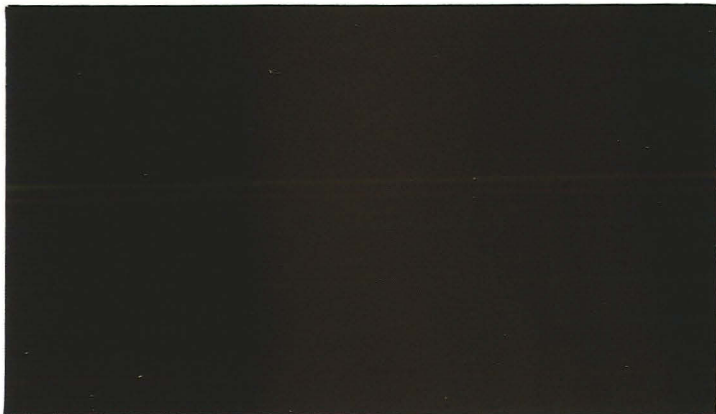
PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

L I N C O L N

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF REPORT;
GOLF ROAD, MABLETHORPE,
LINCOLNSHIRE**

NGR: TF 4998 8598
SITE CODE: GRMT01
LCNCC ACC. NO: 2001.215
Planning ref.: N/110/01247/00





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Report prepared for
Hugh Bourn Developments Ltd.
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September 2001

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PL1: General shot of the site, looking north-north-west

Summary

- *An archaeological watching brief was carried out during restricted groundworks for a residential development on land off Golf Road, Mablethorpe, Lincolnshire.*
- *The site had the potential to yield evidence of prehistoric and later salt-making activities.*
- *No archaeological remains were exposed during the excavation of the main sewer, and the watching brief was terminated prior to excavation of the house footings.*

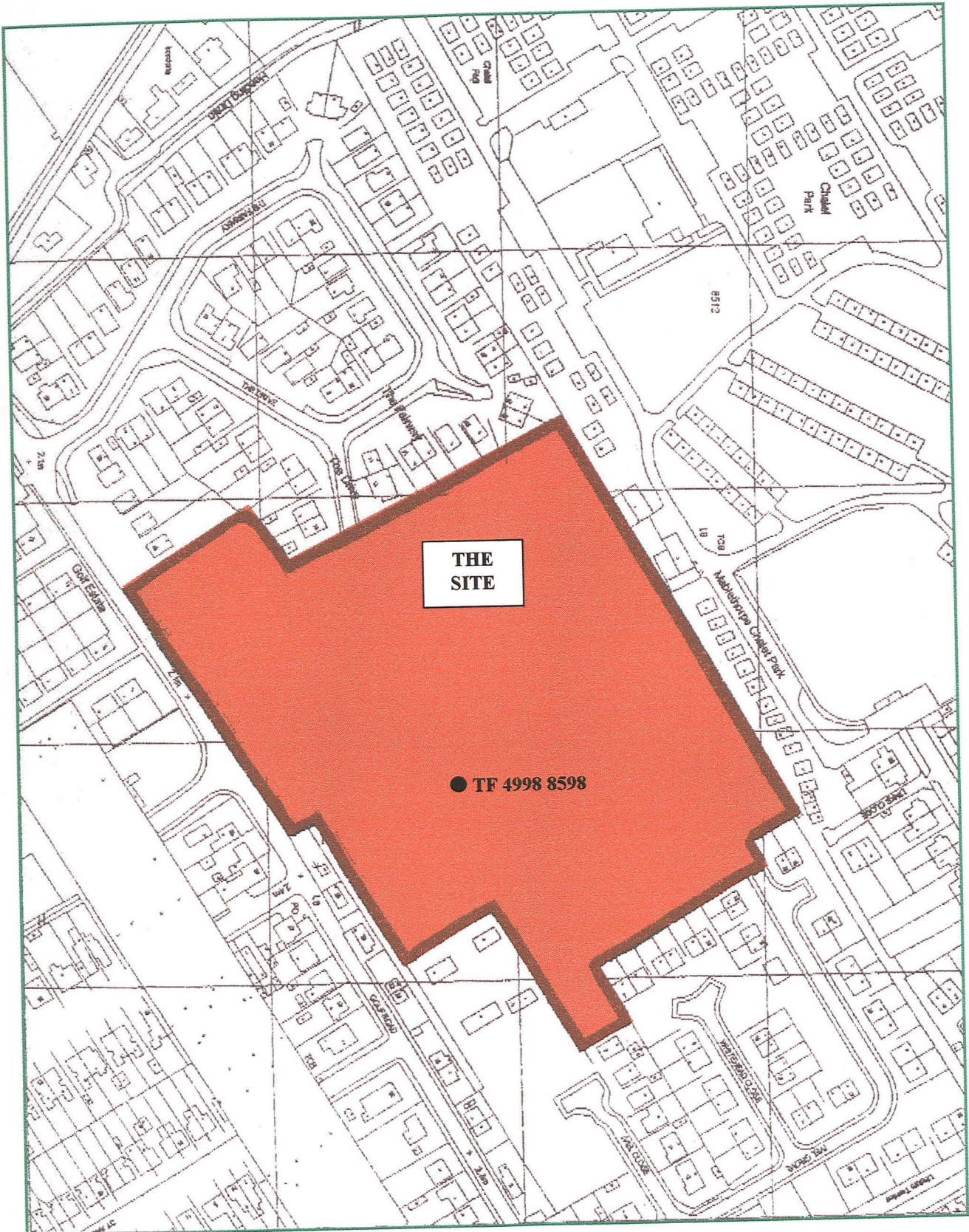


Fig.1: Site location (scale 1:2500)

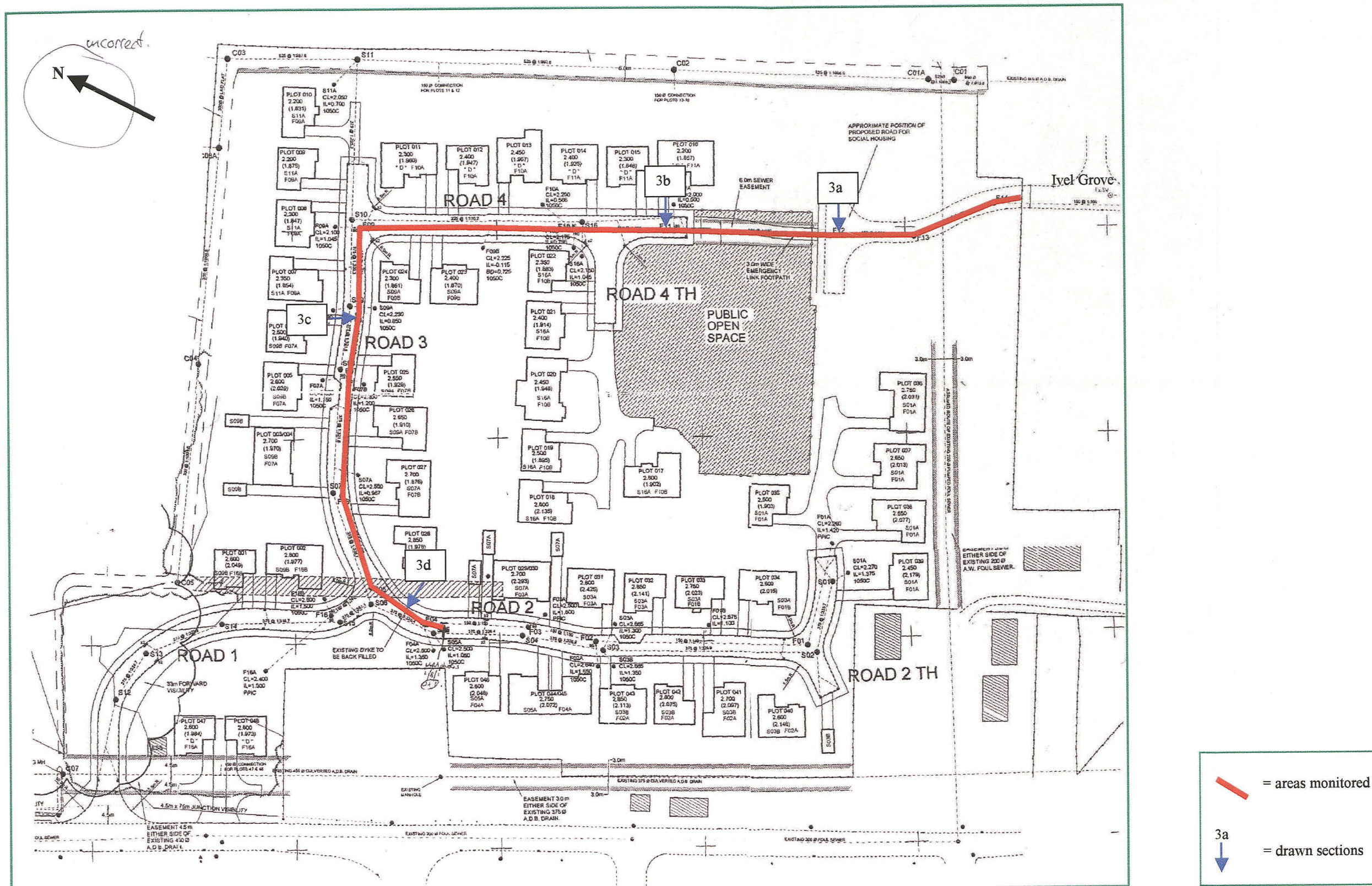


Fig.2: Site location, showing areas monitored and location of representative section drawings (figs 3a-3d) (scale 1:1000)

1.0 Introduction

Hugh Bourn Developments Ltd. commissioned Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks associated with a residential development on land off Golf Road, Mablethorpe, Lincolnshire.

This report details the results of the watching brief, which was limited to sewer excavations. It is written to conform to national and local guidelines as set out in the Lincolnshire County Council document *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: A Manual of Archaeological Practice* (LCC, 1998).

2.0 Site location and description

Mablethorpe is situated on the Lincolnshire coast, in the administrative district of East Lindsey, approximately 55km north-east of Lincoln and 20 km north of Skegness.

The site of the development comprises an irregular block of land of approximately four hectares, on the north side of the town (fig.1). The site is bounded by Golf Road to the west, and residential developments on its other three sides. Medieval ridge and furrow earthworks were visible in the southern half of the field, aligned north-east to south-west. The site centres on NGR TF 4998 8598.

The local drift geology of the area consists of Terrington Beds of silt and clay, deposited in an environment of salt marsh and tidal creeks. This overlies a solid geology of Flamborough, Burnham and Welton Chalk (British Geological Survey, 1996)

3.0 Planning background

Full planning consent was granted by East Lindsey District Council for the erection of 46 bungalows, with associated garages, vehicular and pedestrian access roads and services (planning ref. N/110/01247/00).

The permission was granted subject to the undertaking of an archaeological watching brief on all groundworks. In agreement with the Assistant Built Environment Officer of Lincolnshire County Council, it was decided that this brief should be terminated at an appropriate stage, in the event that the results proved to be negative.

4.0 Archaeological and historical background

There is little direct evidence pertaining to the site itself; however, the area is known to have been a focus of the salt making industry in the later Iron Age. Abundant evidence of this industry, in the form of salt-drying hearths and pottery of the second and first centuries BC, has been collected from Ingoldmells and its environs since the

middle of the 19th century, as well as at Thorpe, approximately 4km south of the current site (May, 1976).

Roman settlement activity is also represented along this stretch of coastline, from small pottery scatters around Mablethorpe itself, while more major settlements are suggested at Sutton-on-Sea, Chapel St. Leonards and Ingoldmells. Again, this evidence is often connected with the continuation of salt-making in the Roman period. It should be noted that considerable coastal erosion has taken place since the Roman period, which has obscured or removed much of the earlier coastal settlement activity (Whitwell, 1992).

There is a dearth of evidence for Anglo-Saxon activity around Mablethorpe, although the town is recorded in the Domesday Survey; the land then being divided between Earl Hugh, Gilbert of Ghent and Rainer of Brimeux (Morgan & Thorne, 1986). The land of Earl Hugh is listed as part of a jurisdiction that included land in Wainfleet, Haugh, Calceby, and Theddlethorpe, a jurisdiction which includes '20 salthouses' (*ibid.*), suggesting that the salt making industry may well have continued into the early medieval period.

Throughout the medieval period, Mablethorpe was divided into two villages, Mablethorpe St. Mary and Mablethorpe St. Peter, the two being combined when the railway arrived in 1877 (Pevsner & Harris, 1989).

5.0 Methodology

In an attempt to limit the liability of the developer, the results of the watching brief were kept under review, in order to make a rapid determination of the archaeological potential of the site at an early stage of the development.

On the basis of the above, a relatively comprehensive watching brief was maintained during the construction of the main sewer, which comprised the first phase of intrusive groundworks. Subsequent to the undertaking of this work, the results were to be reviewed in consultation with the Assistant Built Environment Officer, to revise the methodology as appropriate.

All monitored areas were recorded on a base plan at a scale of 1:1000, (fig.2). A colour photographic record was maintained, and representative section drawings were made of the stratigraphy. Context information was recorded on standard context record sheets. The fieldwork was carried out between July 4th and August 2nd 2001 by Mark Allen, Chris Clay and Simon Savage.

6.0 Results

Groundworks commenced with the excavation of the main sewer, at the southern boundary of the site, adjacent to Ivel Grove. The excavation was carried out with a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a 0.8m wide toothless trenching bucket. The

Fig.3a

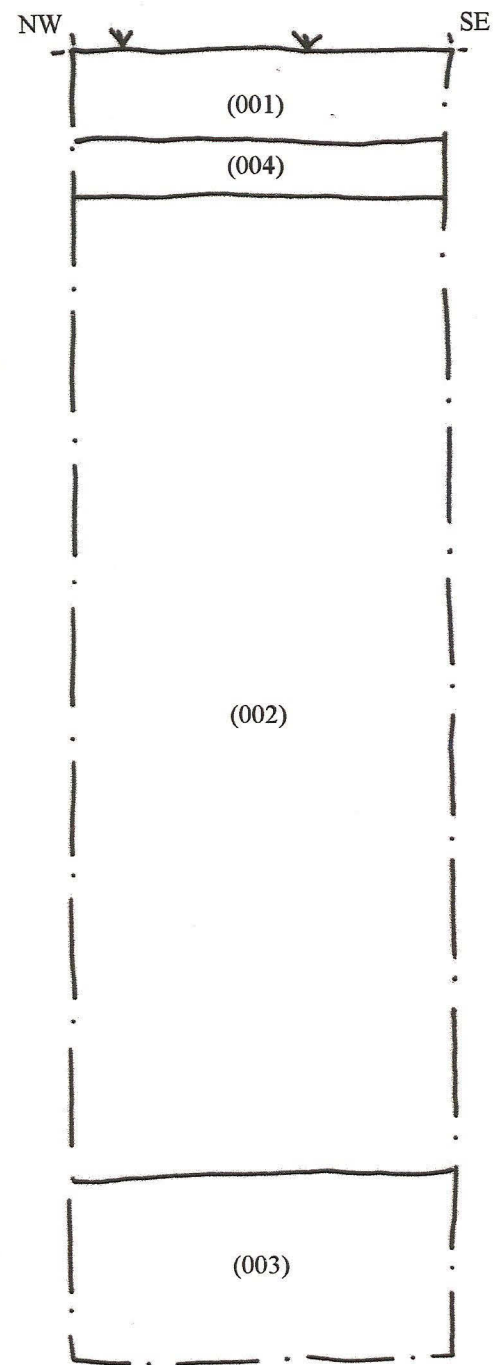


Fig.3b

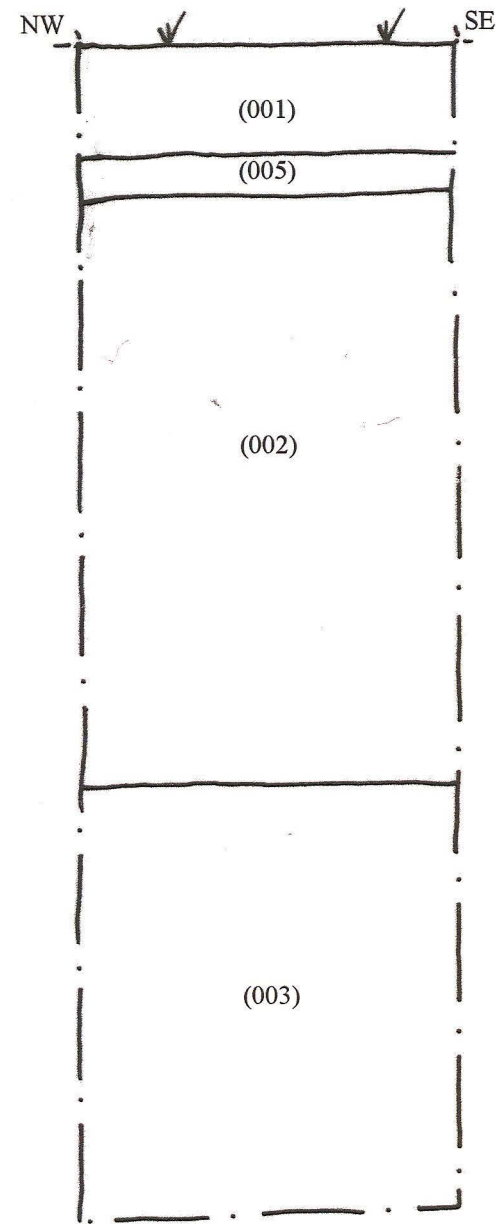


Fig.3c

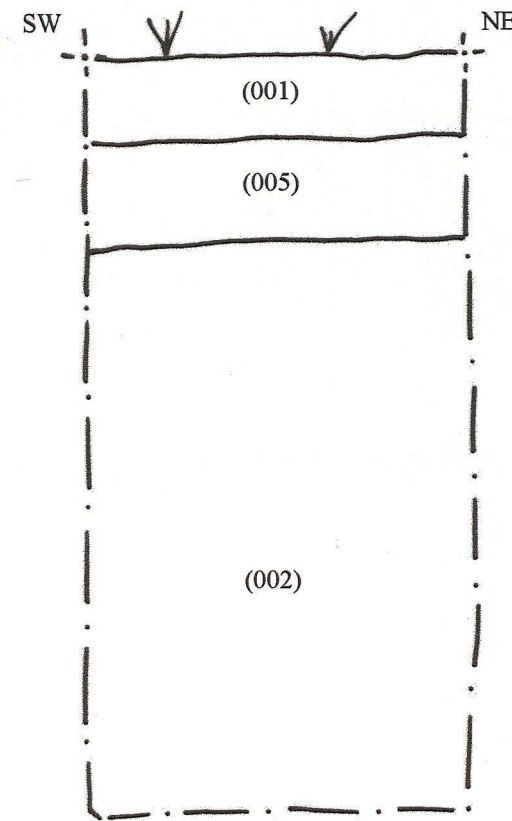


Fig.3d

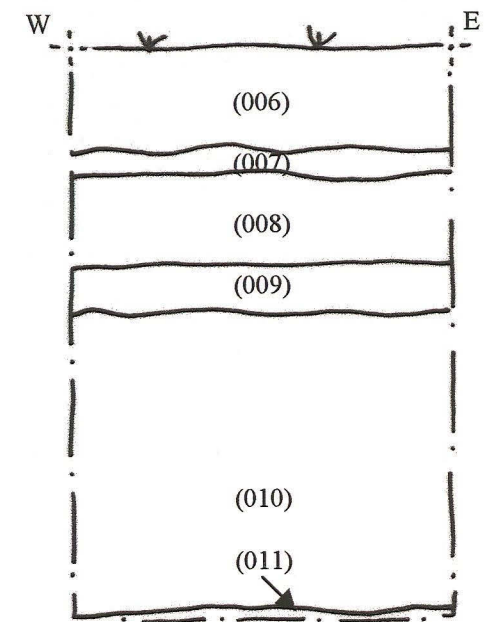


Fig.3(a-d): Representative sections of sewer trench (scale 1:20) (located on fig.2)

trench was excavated to a depth of approximately 3.5m. The depth of the trench, and the frequent collapse of the sides necessitated the use of trench boxes, making it difficult to observe vertical sections in certain areas. Nevertheless, it was possible to define the general stratigraphic sequence.

The uppermost layer was a dark brown/grey topsoil, (001), with occasional gravel inclusions, with a maximum depth of 0.5m. This predominantly overlay a deep deposit of grey natural silty clay, (002) approximately 2.5m deep. This was a compact deposit, characterised by thin blue veining throughout. At the base of the trench, approximately 3m below the ground surface, this sealed a black silty clay, (003), with a very silky texture. This deposit was waterlogged, and its black colour may be derived from decayed organic matter within the silt. Unfortunately health and safety requirements prevented access to the trench to carry out a more detailed inspection of this deposit.

Approximately 47m north-north-west of the start of the groundworks, a deposit of brown sandy clay, (004), approximately 4m wide and 0.12m thick was exposed, separating (001) and (002) (fig.3a). No dating evidence was recovered from this deposit, although its position (directly below the topsoil) suggested it was a modern deposit.

Beginning just to the north-north-west of (004), a subsoil of reddish brown silty clay was observed, continuing eastwards, and becoming less red as it extended to the north-west and west (fig.3b,c). This deposit, (005), was interpreted as a probable subsoil. Further west, a more complex stratigraphy was observed. This consisted of a series of alternating deposits of light blue or blue/grey silts and very fine brown silts (contexts 007-011) (fig.3d).

Following the monitoring of the areas highlighted on fig.2, the results of the watching brief were reviewed in consultation with the Assistant Built Environment Officer, and it was agreed that the archaeological work should be terminated.

7.0 Discussion and conclusion

No archaeological features or artefacts were exposed during the watching brief, resulting in the early termination of the brief. The stratigraphic sequence, represented in particular by contexts (007) to (011), indicates the natural deposition of marine alluvial material, within a coastal saltmarsh environment. The alternating layers are evidence of repeated marine transgression, where silt mudflats are formed in an open water environment, and subsequent regressions allow the formation of thin blue/grey layers of oxidised silt.

8.0 Effectiveness of methodology

The methodology chosen was appropriate to the development. The monitoring of the sewer trench allowed a rapid assessment of the archaeological potential of the site. The negative results that this produced allowed an early termination of the watching brief, thus minimising the interference caused to the developer, and ensuring that the archaeological resource in the area was not compromised.

9.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to express thanks to Hugh Bourn Developments Ltd. for this commission and to the site staff for their co-operation during the groundworks.

10.0 References

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- Pevsner N., & Harris J., 1989, *The Buildings of England: Lincolnshire, second edition*, Penguin, London
- Whitwell J.B, 1992, *Roman Lincolnshire*, History of Lincolnshire II, History of Lincolnshire Committee, Lincoln

11.0 Site archive

The documentary archive for the site is currently in the possession of Pre-Construct Archaeology. This will be deposited at Lincoln City and County Museum within six months. Access to the archive may be gained by quoting the global accession number 2001.215.

12.0 Appendices

12.1 Colour plates



PL1: General shot of the site, looking north-north-west

12.2 List of archaeological contexts

| Context | Description |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| 001 | Topsoil = (006) |
| 002 | Grey silty clay |
| 003 | Black (organic?) clay |
| 004 | Modern deposit |
| 005 | Subsoil |
| 006 | Topsoil = (001) |
| 007 | Lens of oxidized silt |
| 008 | Orange/brown mudflat silt |
| 009 | Lens of oxidized silt |
| 010 | Mid brown mudflat silt |
| 011 | Lens of oxidized silt |