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Introd	ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
2.1	OF DEVELOPMENT ADJACENT TO
2.2	MIDDLE STREET,
2.3	SKILLINGTON,
2.4	LINCOLNSHIRE
	(SMS99)
Aims	
Methods	



**A P S**  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
PROJECT  
SERVICES



Event . L12599

Source L17198  
17199

Conservation  
Services

09 NOV 2001

Highways & Planning  
Directorate

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
OF DEVELOPMENT ADJACENT TO  
MIDDLE STREET,  
SKILLINGTON,  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
(SMS99)**

Work Undertaken For  
Rochford Homes Ltd

October 2001

Report Compiled by  
Paul Cope-Faulkner BA (Hons) AIFA

National Grid Reference: SK 897 257  
Planning Application No: S98/0625/67  
City and County Museum Accession No:83.99

A.P.S. Report No. 124/01





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## 2. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Definition of a Watching Brief

An archaeological watching brief is 'defined as a formal program 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' (ISA 1997).

### 2.2 Planning Background

Between the 15<sup>th</sup> April and 6<sup>th</sup> May 1999 an archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of foundation trenches for four houses and associated features on land adjacent to Middle Street, Skillington, Lincolnshire. Approval for the development was sought through the submission of planning application 998/0623/67. Permission was granted subject to a standard condition for archaeological recording. The

archaeological work was commissioned by Rochford Homes Limited and was carried out by Archaeological Project Services in accordance with a specification agreed by the Community Archaeologist for South Kesteven District Council (Appendix 1).

### 2.3 Topography, Geology and Soils

Skillington is located approximately 19km south of Gainsborough and 22km northwest of Stamford, in the administrative district of South Kesteven, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The area of development is situated 230m above sea level. The site is defined by the parish church of St. Andrew at the northern end and the railway line at the southern end. The National Grid Reference is SK 597 251 (Fig. 2.3).

Local soils are of the Blunston I and II Associations, typically shallow brown rendzinas (Hodgson *et al.* 1984, 179, 181). These soils are developed upon a solid geology of Jurassic Upper Lincolnshire Limestone (GSCB 1964).

### 2.4 Archaeological Background

Skillington is located in an area of known archaeological remains dating from the Late Saxon period. The nave of the parish church is typically Late Saxon and dates to AD 930-1100 (Taylor and Taylor 1980, 349).

Skillington is first mentioned in a will, dating to c. 1067 and again in the Domesday Survey of c. 1086. Referred to as Scillington the name is a Scandinavianised form of the Old English Scilling-tun and means 'the settlement of Scilling' (Ekwall 1974, 425). At the time of the Domesday Survey, the land was owned by the King, the Archbishop of York, Guy of Crisp and Carl and contained 82 acres of meadow, 400 acres of underwood and 280 acres of woodland for pannage. It also shared a church with the parish of Easton and had a



## 1. SUMMARY

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during construction of dwellings on land at Middle Street, Skillington, Lincolnshire. The watching brief monitored the excavation of foundation trenches and service trenches.*

*The development site lies within the medieval (AD 1066-1500) core of the village although elements within the church are Late Saxon (AD 850-1066) in date.*

*Deposits encountered during the watching brief comprised topsoil, subsoil and the underlying natural geology. No artefactual material was retrieved or observed during the investigation.*

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Definition of a Watching Brief

An archaeological watching brief is 'defined as a formal program 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 maybe disturbed or destroyed.' (IFA 1997).

### 2.2 Planning Background

Between the 15<sup>th</sup> April and 6<sup>th</sup> May 1999 an archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of foundation trenches for four houses and associated features on land adjacent to Middle Street, Skillington, Lincolnshire. Approval for the development was sought through the submission of planning application S98/0625/67. Permission was granted subject to a standard condition for archaeological recording. The

archaeological work was commissioned by Rochford Homes Limited and was carried out by Archaeological Project Services in accordance with a specification agreed by the Community Archaeologist for South Kesteven District Council (Appendix 1).

### 2.3 Topography, Geology and Soils

Skillington is located approximately 10km south of Grantham and 22km northwest of Stamford, in the administrative district of South Kesteven, Lincolnshire (Fig.1).

The area of development is situated 250m southeast of the village centre as defined by the parish church of St. James, at the junction of Middle Street and Back Lane at National grid Reference SK 897 257 (Fig 2.).

Local soils are of the Elmton I and III Associations, typically shallow brown rendzinas (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 179, 181). These soils are developed upon a solid geology of Jurassic Upper Lincolnshire Limestone (GSGB 1964).

### 2.4 Archaeological Background

Skillington is located in an area of known archaeological remains dating from the Late Saxon period. The nave of the parish church is typically Late Saxon and dates to AD 950-1100 (Taylor and Taylor 1980, 549).

Skillington is first mentioned in a will, dating to c. 1067 and again in the Domesday Survey of c. 1086. Referred to as *Scilluntun* the name is a Scandinavianised form of the Old English *Scillinga-tūn* and means 'the settlement of Scilling' (Ekwall 1974, 425). At the time of the Domesday Survey, the land was owned by the King, the Archbishop of York, Guy of Craon and Carle and contained 82 acres of meadow, 400 acres of underwood and 280 acres of woodland for pannage. It also shared a church with the parish of Easton and had a



mill (Foster and Longley 1976).

The only extant remains of the medieval period are portions of the church of St. James, which, apart from the nave, are dated to the 13<sup>th</sup> century (Pevsner and Harris 1989, 648) and also the base of a medieval village cross. A few pasture fields around the village contain the slight earthworks of former house platforms.

### 3. AIMS

The aim of the watching brief, as detailed in the specification (Appendix 1), was to record and interpret archaeological features exposed during the ground disturbance. The objectives were to determine the form, function, spatial arrangement, date and sequence of any archaeological remains.

### 4. METHODS

The development area was stripped of topsoil and footings, c. 0.6m wide by 1m deep, were machine excavated. Following excavation, the sides of all trenches were 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 deposit or feature revealed was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. Sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10. A photographic record was also compiled. Recording of deposits encountered during the watching brief was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services practice.

Records of the deposits and features identified during the watching brief were

examined. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them. A list of all contexts with interpretations appears as Appendix 2.

### 5. RESULTS

Archaeological contexts are described below. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

The earliest deposit encountered during the investigation was a fragmented limestone outcrop (007) located in the base of the Plot 2 foundation trenches. The upper surface of this had weathered to produce a 0.36m thick yellowish brown sandy silt (006).

Within the service trench the earliest deposit was brownish yellow clayey sand with limestone fragments (002).

Overlying the natural deposits was a subsoil layer varying between reddish brown clayey sand (001) and brown sandy silt (005). This varied in thickness from 0.1m to 0.6m. Overlying the subsoil was the modern topsoil which was recorded as a blackish brown sandy clay (003) along the service trench and as a brownish grey sandy silt (004) within Plot 2.

### 6. DISCUSSION

Archaeological investigations revealed a sequence of natural, subsoil and topsoil deposits. Natural deposits represent the underlying solid geology and the weathered upper surface of the limestone. No artefacts were recovered or observed during the investigation.



## 7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigations at Middle Street, Skillington were undertaken because the site lay within an area of known archaeological remains, notably the proximity the medieval village.

However, no archaeological remains were encountered and only a sequence of natural, subsoil and topsoil deposits were recorded. No artefacts were retrieved. The nature of the local site conditions would suggest that few environmental indicators (seeds, wood, shells *etc.*) would survive, other than through charring.

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services would like to acknowledge the assistance of Mr Peter Burrows of Rochford Homes Ltd who commissioned the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor and this report was edited by Tom Lane. The South Kesteven Community Archaeologist, Jo Simpson, kindly provided access to the relevant archaeological parish files. Other background information was obtained from the library maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

## 9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Gary Taylor  
Site Supervisor: Neil Herbert, Fiona Walker  
Finds processing: Denise Buckley  
Photographic reproduction: Sue Unsworth  
Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner  
Post-excavation analysis: Paul Cope-Faulkner

## 10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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## 11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services

GSGB Geological Survey of Great Britain

IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists



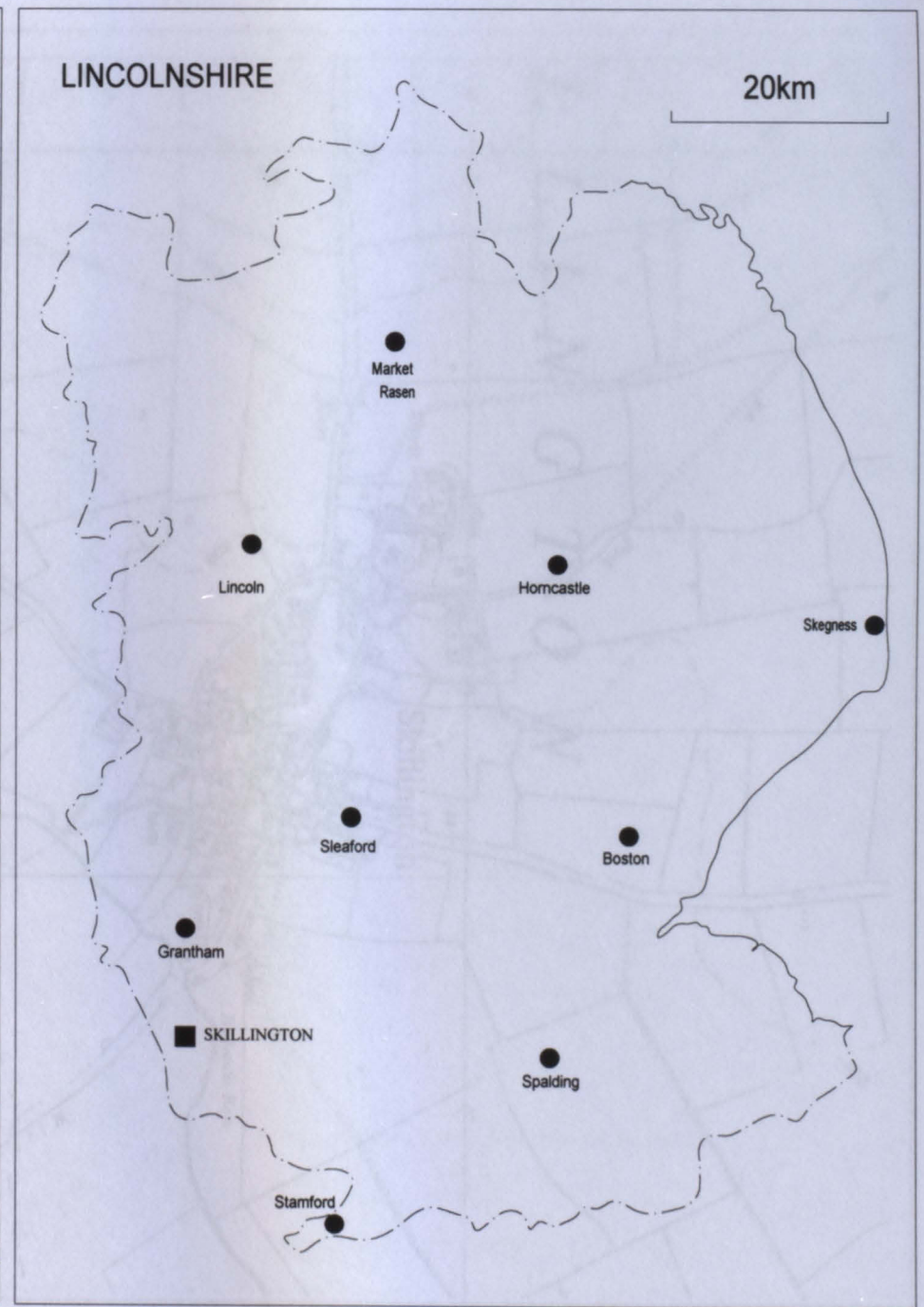
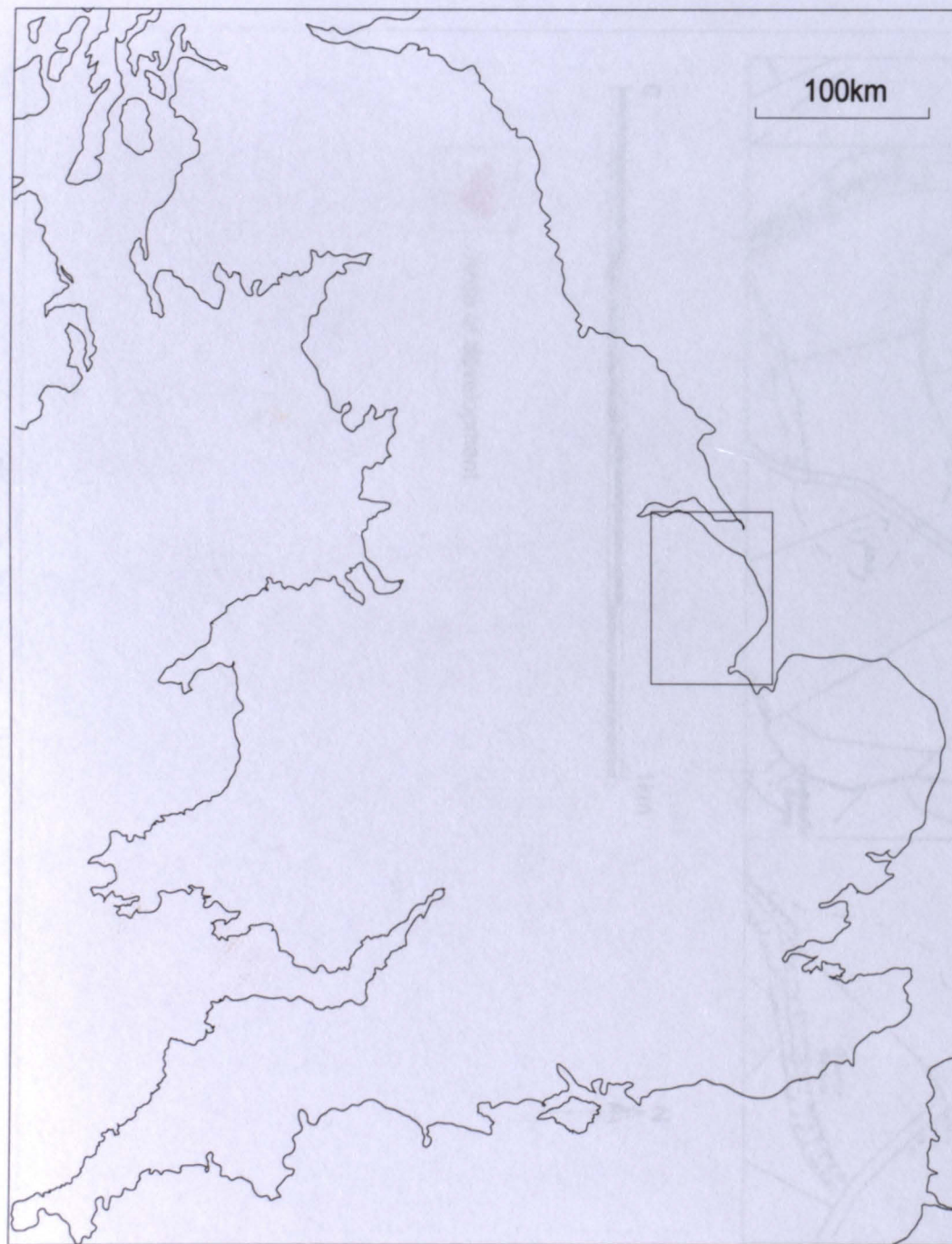


Figure 1 - General Location Plan





Area of development

Figure 2 - Site location plan





Figure 3 - Plan of the development showing location of plots and Sections 1 and 2



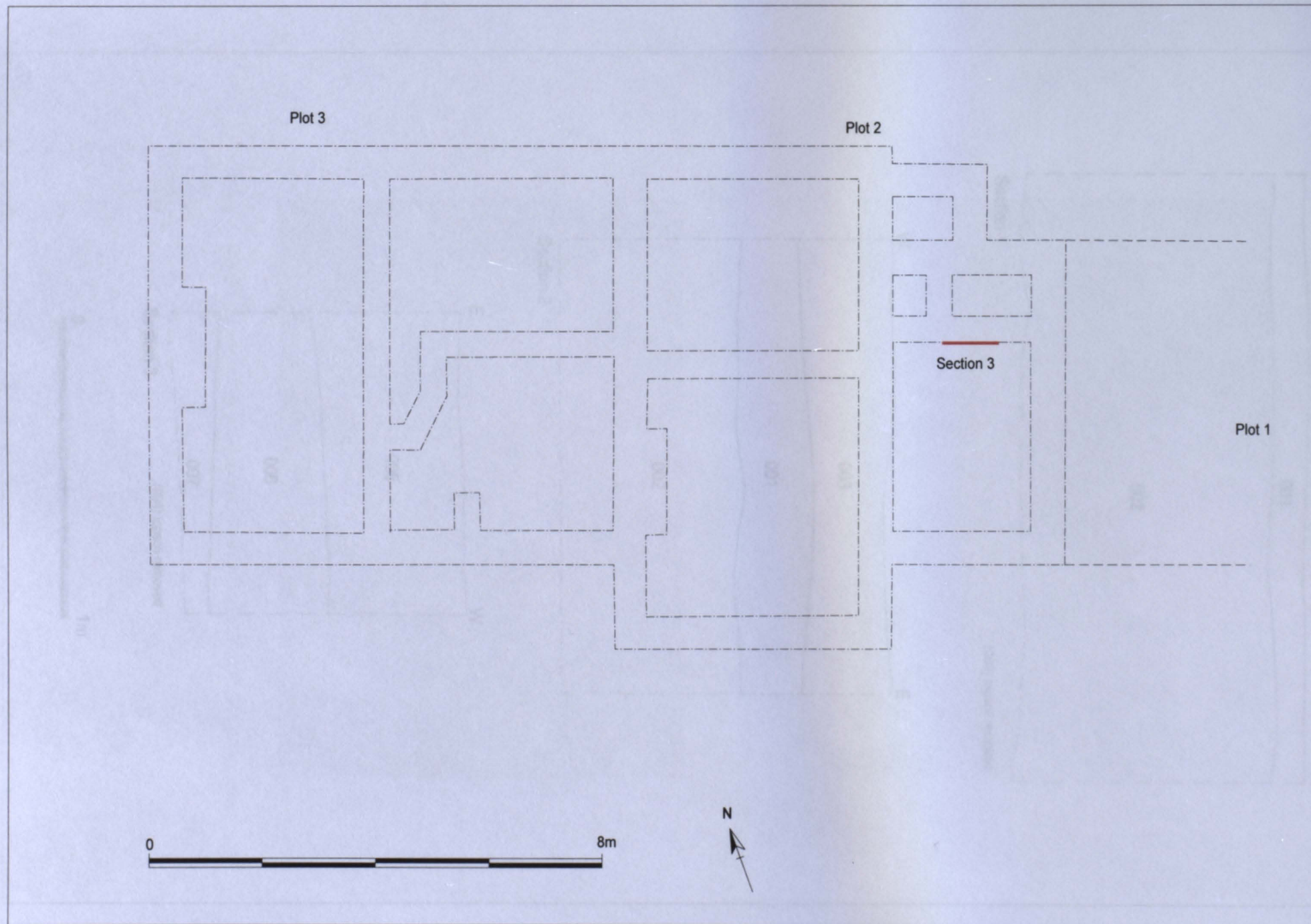


Figure 4 - Foundation plan of Plot 2 showing location of Section 3



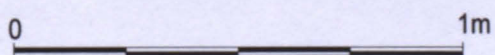
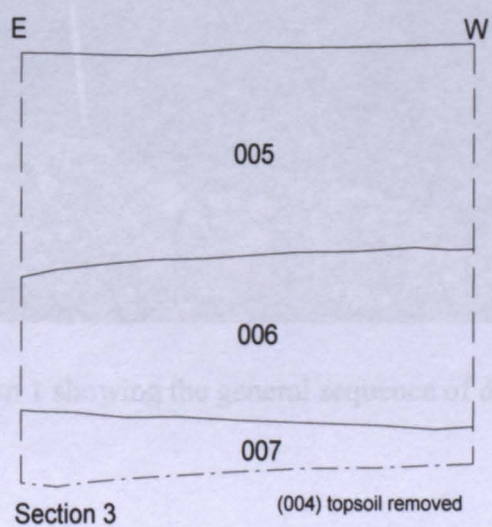
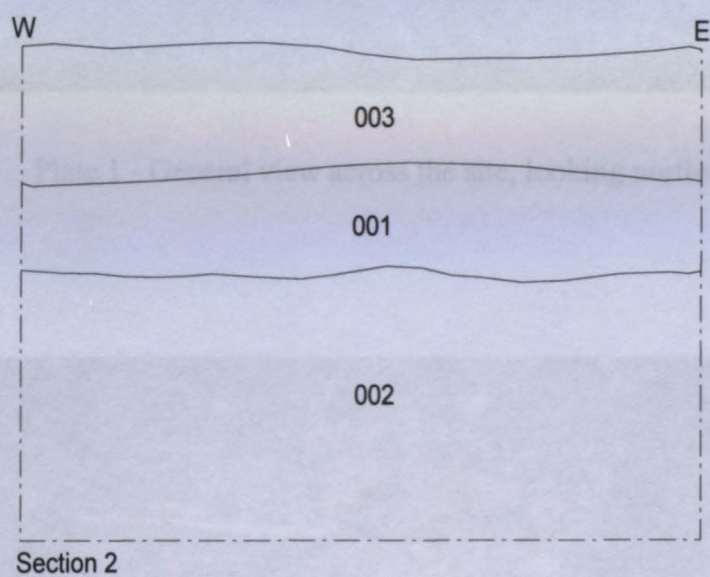
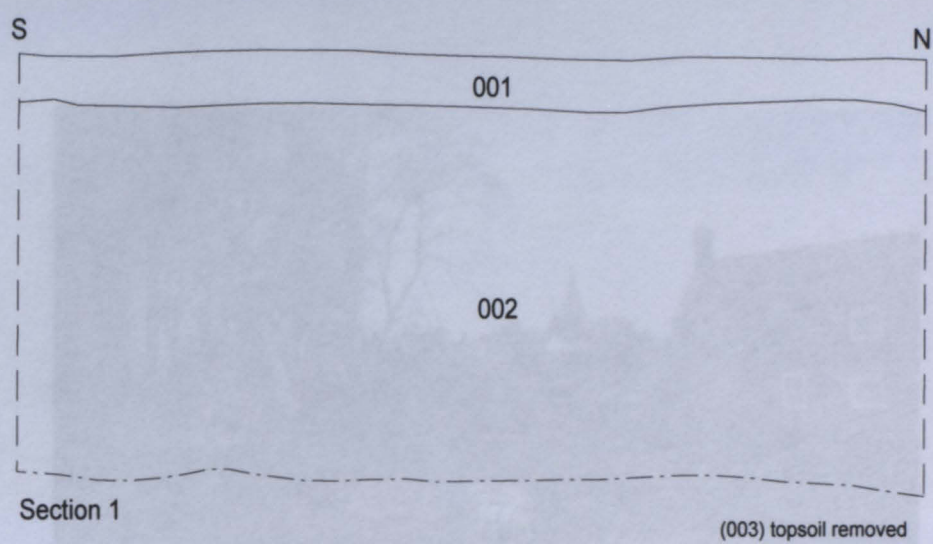


Figure 5 - Sections 1, 2 and 3





Plate 1 - General view across the site, looking northwest



Plate 2 - Section 1 showing the general sequence of deposits, looking west



## Appendix 1

### LAND AT MIDDLE STREET, SKILLINGTON, LINCOLNSHIRE - SPECIFICATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

#### 1. SUMMARY

- a. *A watching brief is required during development at Middle Street, Skillington, Lincolnshire.*
- b. *The development lies close to the medieval core of the village and earthworks of settlement remains lie just to the north and northwest of the site.*
- c. *The watching brief will be undertaken during groundworks associated with the development. The archaeological features exposed will be recorded in writing, graphically and photographically.*
- d. *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

- a. This document comprises a specification for an archaeological watching brief during development on land at Middle Street, Skillington. The site is located at national grid reference SK 897 257.
- b. This document contains the following parts:
  - i. Overview.
  - ii. Stages of work and methodologies.
  - iii. List of specialists.
  - iv. Programme of works and staffing structure of the project.

#### 3. SITE LOCATION

- a. Skillington lies approximately 10km south of Grantham in the administrative district of South Kesteven. The site lies between Middle Street and Back Lane near the village centre at national grid reference SK 897 257.

#### 4. PLANNING BACKGROUND

- a. A planning application (S98/0625/67) was submitted to South Kesteven District Council for a programme of residential development. Permission has been granted subject to a condition requiring the implementation of an archaeological watching brief during the development.

#### 5. SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY

- a. The site lies on a slight slope down to the east at approximately 115m OD. Local soils are the Elmton 3 Association, brown rendzinas on Jurassic limestone (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 181).

#### 6. THE ARCHAEOLOGY

- a. Skillington is referred to as early as 1067 and again in the Domesday Book of 1086 when it shared a church with an adjacent manor. This church was probably in Skillington itself as the existing parish church contains Anglo-Saxon architectural remains.
- b. Earthworks, including house platforms, are located just to the north and northwest of the site. These are of



unknown date but possibly medieval. A little further to the northwest is the manor house, of 17th century date but possibly on the site of an earlier manor as a moat of probable medieval date part encircles the site. Other buildings of 17th century date exist in Skillington, including a substantial dovecote.

## 7. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- a. The aims of the watching brief will be:
  - i. To record and interpret the archaeological features exposed during the excavation of the foundation trenches and other areas of ground disturbance.
- b. The objectives of the watching brief will be to:
  - i. Determine the form and function of the archaeological features encountered;
  - ii. Determine the spatial arrangement of the archaeological features encountered;
  - iii. As far as practicable, recover dating evidence from the archaeological features, and
  - iv. Establish the sequence of the archaeological remains present on the site.

## 8. SITE OPERATIONS

- a. General considerations
  - i. All work will be undertaken following statutory Health and Safety requirements in operation at the time of the watching brief.
  - ii. 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.
  - iii. 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.
- b. Methodology
  - i. The watching brief will be undertaken during the ground works phase of development, and includes the archaeological monitoring of all phases of soil movement.
  - ii. 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.
  - iii. Any finds recovered will be bagged and labelled for later analysis.
  - iv. Throughout the watching brief a photographic record consisting of colour prints will be compiled. The photographic record will consist of:
    - (1) The site during work to show specific stages, and the layout of the archaeology within the trench.
    - (2) groups of features where their relationship is important
  - v. 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

### a. Stage 1

- i. 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: the colour prints will be labelled, the labelling referring to schedules identifying the subject/s photographed.
- ii. 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.

### b. Stage 2

- i. Detailed examination of the stratigraphic matrix to enable the determination of the various phases of activity on the site.
- ii. Finds will be sent to specialists for identification and dating.

### c. Stage 3

- i. On completion of stage 2, a report detailing the findings of the watching brief will be prepared.
- ii. This will consist of:
  - (1) A non-technical summary of the results of the investigation.
  - (2) A description of the archaeological setting of the watching brief.
  - (3) Description of the topography of the site.
  - (4) Description of the methodologies used during the watching brief.
  - (5) A text describing the findings of the watching brief.
  - (6) A consideration of the local, regional and national context of the watching brief findings.
  - (7) Plans of the archaeological features exposed. If a sequence of archaeological deposits is encountered, separate plans for each phase will be produced.
  - (8) Sections of the archaeological features.
  - (9) Interpretation of the archaeological features exposed, and their chronology and setting within the surrounding landscape.
  - (10) Specialist reports on the finds from the site.
  - (11) Appropriate photographs of the site and specific archaeological features.

## 10. REPORT DEPOSITION

- a. 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

- a. 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

- a. 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

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

## 14. VARIATIONS

- a. 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

- a. 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.
- b. An archaeological supervisor with experience of watching briefs will undertake the work.
- c. 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

- a. The following organisations/persons will, in principal 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 - H Healey, Independent Archaeologist; or G Taylor, Archaeological Project Services



Non-pottery Artefacts

J Cowgill, Independent Specialist; or G Taylor, Archaeological Project Services

Animal Bones

Environmental Archaeology Consultancy

Environmental Analysis

J Rackham, Independent Specialist; or P Cope-Faulkner, Archaeological Project Services

Human Remains Analysis

R Gowland, Independent Specialist

17.

## 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



## Appendix 2

### CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Description	Interpretation
001	Loose mid reddish brown clayey sand, frequent angular limestone fragments, 0.1m thick	Subsoil
002	Loose light brownish yellow clayey sand, frequent angular limestone, 0.9m thick	Natural deposit
003	Loose blackish brown sandy clay, frequent angular limestone fragments, 0.3m thick	Topsoil
004	Firm mid brownish grey sandy silt, moderate angular limestone fragments, 0.5m thick	Topsoil
005	Firm mid brown sandy silt, moderate angular limestone fragments, 0.6m thick	Subsoil
006	Firm light mid yellowish brown sandy silt, moderate angular limestone fragments, 0.36m thick	Natural deposit
007	Firm mid yellow limestone (fragmented)	Natural geology



## 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>Layer</b>	A layer is a term 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>Mesolithic</b>	The 'Middle Stone Age' period, part of the prehistoric era, dating from approximately 8200-4500 BC.
<b>Natural</b>	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity.
<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:

7	Context records
3	Scale drawing
1	Photographic record
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: 83.99

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: SMS 99

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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