

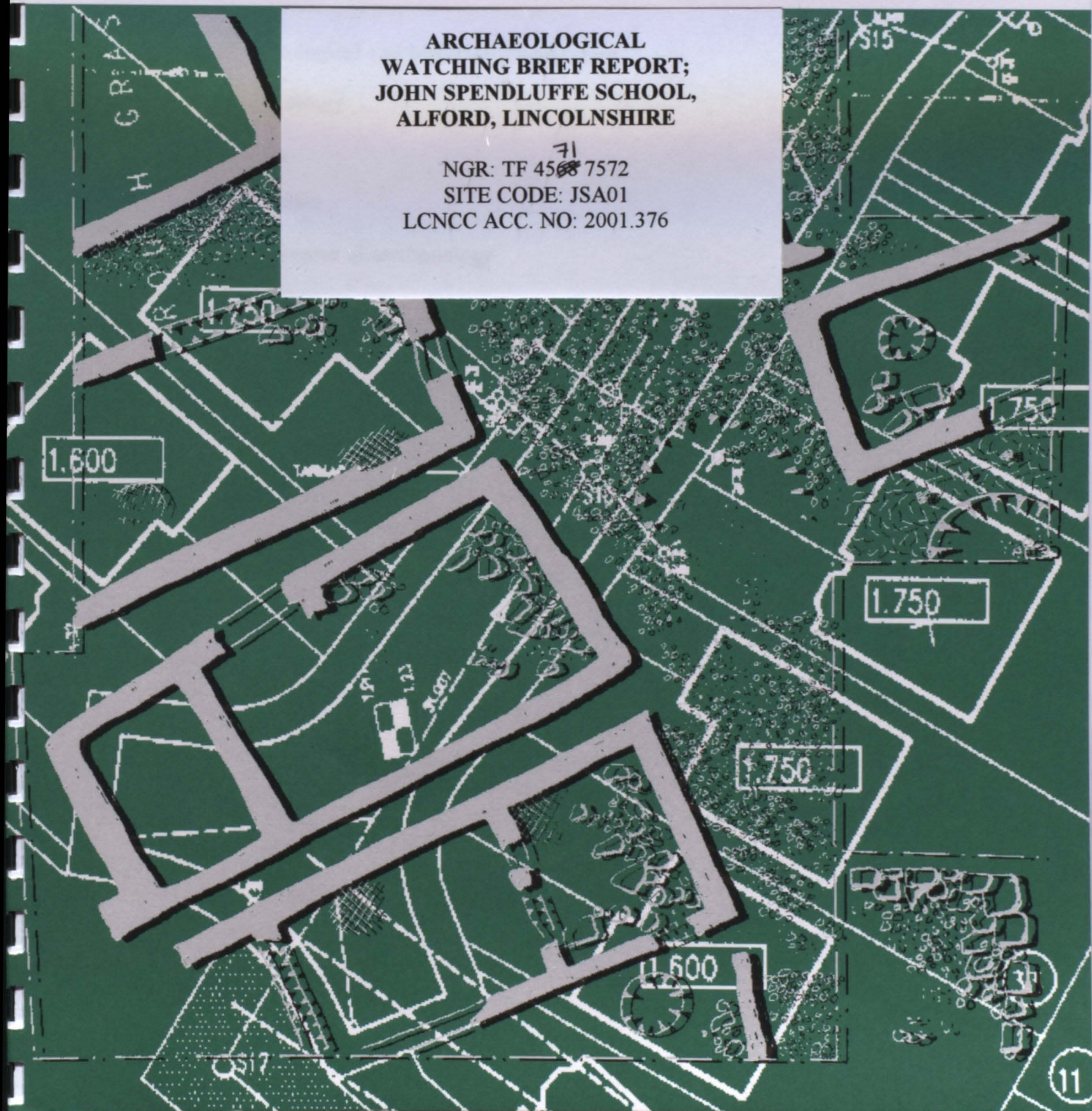
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PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY L I N C O L N

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF REPORT;
JOHN SPENDLUFFE SCHOOL,
ALFORD, LINCOLNSHIRE**

NGR: TF 45⁷¹~~68~~ 7572
SITE CODE: JSA01
LCNCC ACC. NO: 2001.376



Conservation
Services

26 NOV 2001

Highways & Planning
Directorate



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Report prepared for
Hyder Business Services
by Chris Clay
November 2001

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Summary

- *An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the groundworks for a new Science Laboratory at John Spendluffe School, Alford, Lincolnshire.*
- *Although the site was beyond the historic core of the village, it had the potential to reveal remains dating from the prehistoric through to medieval periods.*
- *No archaeological deposits were exposed, suggesting that this development will not adversely affect archaeological resources in the area of construction.*



Fig.1: General site location. (Scale 1:25000)
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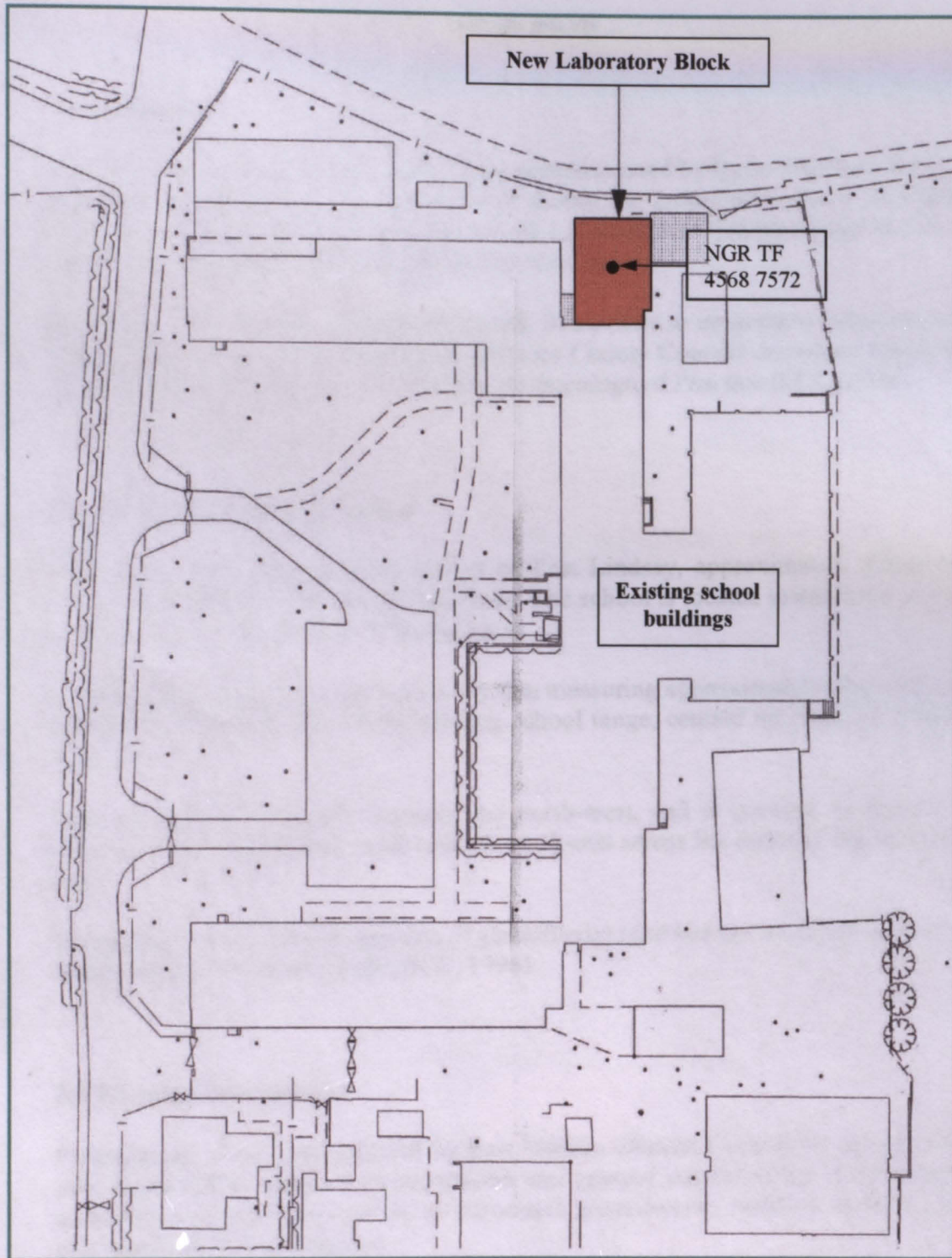


Fig.2: Site location, showing the proposed laboratory block in relation to the existing school buildings (the area highlighted in red indicates the extent of the development) (scale 1:750)

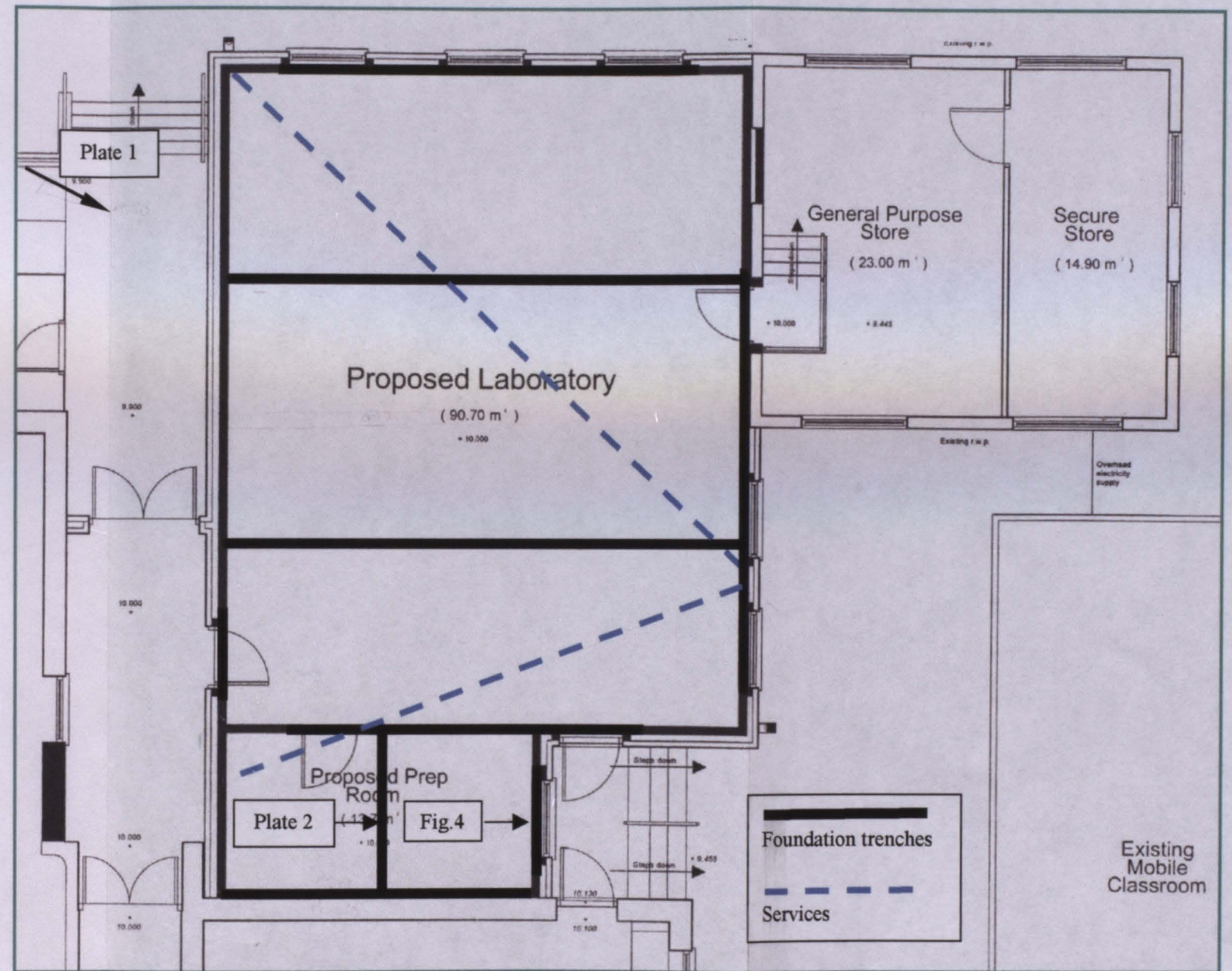


Fig.3: Development plan, showing the layout of the foundation trenches, services, and location of photographs and drawn sections (scale 1:100)

1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) were commissioned by Hyder Business Services to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks for a new Science Laboratory at John Spendluffe School, Alford, Lincolnshire. This was undertaken to fulfil a planning requirement of East Lindsey District Council.

This report details the result of the fieldwork. It is written to conform to both 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

Alford is in the administrative district of East Lindsey, approximately 47km east of Lincoln and 14km north-west of Skegness. The school is located towards the south-east of the town, on the east side of Hanby Lane.

The new laboratory block consists of an area measuring approximately 14m x 9m, and is situated on the north side of the existing school range, centred on NGR TF 4568 7572 (figs. 2,3).
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The site area slopes gently towards the north-west, and is covered by tarmac and a concrete walkway, running south-west to north-east across the centre of the development area.

The geology of the locality consists of glaciofluvial sand and gravel deposits, overlying a solid geology of Ferriby Chalk (BGS, 1996).

3.0 Planning background

Planning permission was granted by East Lindsey District Council for the erection of a new Science Laboratory. The permission was granted subject to the undertaking of an archaeological watching brief on all associated groundworks, resulting in the production of a report and project archive.

4.0 Archaeological and historical background

The County Sites and Monuments Record lists numerous artefacts from the parish (see table below). For the prehistoric period, these include 5 stone axes, a Bronze Age cooking vessel, and a leaf shaped flint arrowhead. A Bronze Age round barrow is also listed as having stood very close to the school grounds.

Alford lies on Barton Street, a suspected prehistoric route running along the eastern edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds, from Barton on Humber to Alford, and possibly Burgh-le-Marsh (May, 1976).

Romano-British activity is represented by the discovery of a scatter of pottery and 5 coins, including a denarius of Trajan (AD98-117), and a coin of Constantine I (AD307-37).

The earliest recorded post-Roman activity in Alford derives from numismatic evidence: three *sceatta* of early 8th century date, and three late 8th century coins of Mercian origin have been discovered in the area (Blackburn, 1993). The place name evidence also suggests that a well established settlement was in existence at this time, deriving from the Old English 'ald' and 'ford', translating as 'the old ford'.

The settlement continued to thrive throughout the medieval period; it appears in the Domesday Book, as 'Alforde', when the land was in the ownership of Gilbert of Ghent and William Tallboys (Morgan & Thorne, 1986); and it received a market in 1283 (Pevsner & Harris, 1989)

| SMR reference no. | Description | NGR |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|
| 42528 | Bronze Age cooking vessel | TF 4481 7578 |
| 42530 | Coin of Constantine I (AD307-37) | TF 4498 7594 |
| 42532 | Polished stone axe | TF 453 760 |
| 42533 | 3 Romano-British coins | TF 453 762 |
| 42534 | Bronze Age flint dagger | TF 453 755 |
| 42535 | Stone axe/Bronze Age barrow | TF 457 756 |
| 42537 | Denarius of Trajan (AD98-117) | TF 4529 7558 |
| 42538 | Leaf shaped arrowhead | TF 4506 7603 |
| 42539 | Early Bronze Age stone axehammer | TF 4602 7584 |
| 42542 | Stone axe | TF 4550 7665 |
| 42546 | Polished stone axe | TF 456 759 |
| 42549 | Romano-British pot | TF 458 754 |

5.0 Methodology

Prior to the groundworks, a programme of demolition work had been completed. This involved the removal of; an awning covering a walkway on the south-western edge of the site, a concrete walkway across the centre of the site, and a tarmac surface that covered the southern portion of the development area.

The groundworks involved the excavation of a ground beam trench, and trenches for internal crossbeams to support a concrete raft. The excavations were carried out using a JCB fitted with a 0.6m wide toothed bucket, and were monitored by the author on November 1st and 2nd, 2001.

6.0 Results

The stratigraphy exposed was predominantly uniform throughout the extent of the footprint. The uppermost deposit was a tarmac surface (001), which was approximately 0.1m thick and covered the southern part of the site. This overlay a 0.15m deposit of subangular chalk hardcore, (002). This merged with a mid to dark brown slightly clayey silt, (003), approximately 0.55m deep. This was interpreted as a make up layer/levelling deposit related to the construction of the existing school complex. (003) sat directly upon a 0.15m thick dark grey clay-silt, (004). The colour and texture of this deposit, and the abundance of plant roots within it, suggested that (004) was the remainder of an old topsoil, onto which make up layer (003) was deposited. The lowest deposit exposed, (005), was a mid brown clayey silt, representing a subsoil deposit. All of the deposits were devoid of archaeological features or artefacts (fig.4).

The only variation to the above pattern occurred where trenches carrying services transected the otherwise simple stratigraphy.

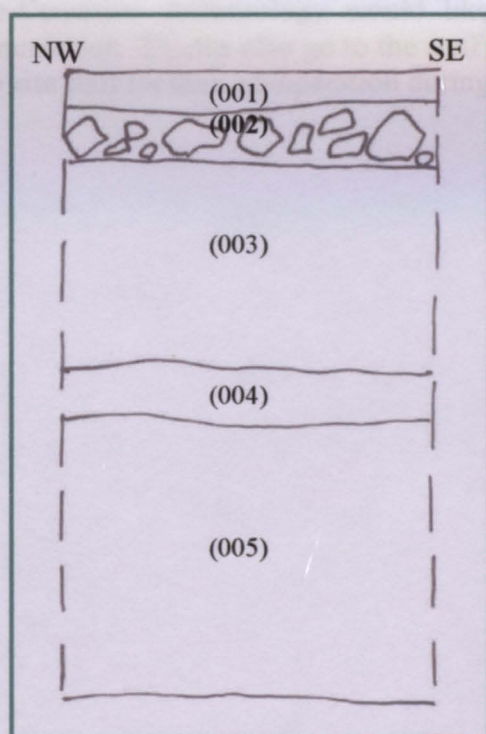


Fig.4: Representative section of stratigraphic sequence (scale 1:20)

7.0 Conclusion

No archaeological deposits or features were exposed during the groundworks. The watching brief also failed to yield any artefacts.

The development area has been subject to considerable disturbance during the construction of the adjacent school buildings, as is evidenced by the presence of a buried topsoil, sealed by a subsequent make up layer and modern tarmac surface. It can be

concluded therefore that the development has not compromised any archaeological resources in the area.

8.0 Effectiveness of methodology

The methodology chosen was appropriate to the development. It allowed a rapid assessment of the archaeological potential of the site. A more detailed level of archaeological intervention was not necessary, as suggested by the negative result of the fieldwork.

9.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology would like to thank Hyder Business Services for this commission. Thanks also go to the staff and students of John Spendluffe School, and to the site staff for their co-operation during the recording brief.

10.0 References

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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 2001.376

12.2 List of archaeological contexts

| Context | Type | Description |
|----------------|-------------|--------------------|
| 001 | Layer | Tarmac surface |
| 002 | Layer | Hardcore |
| 003 | Layer | Make up layer |
| 004 | Layer | Buried topsoil |
| 005 | Layer | Subsoil |

12.0 Appendices

12.1 Colour plates



PL1: General view of the site, looking east-north-east



PL2: Representative shot of stratigraphic sequence, looking north-east