

94/2

RUSKINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL
WATCHING BRIEF



LINCOLNSHIRE

ADVANCING LINCOLNSHIRE'S PAST

RUSKINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL W/B



11
CITY OF
COUNTY OF
LINDSEY

ELI 539

SLI 5121 1486

60495 - Roman
60496 - E Med
60497 - Med.

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
AT THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL,
RUSKINGTON,
LINCOLNSHIRE**

Work Undertaken For
Lincolnshire County Council

January 1994

Heritage Lincolnshire
28 Boston Road,
SLEAFORD,
Lincolnshire NG34 7ET
Charity No: 1001463. Company No: 2554738 (England)

RPC 93

CONTENTS

List of Figures

1.	Summary	1
2.	Introduction	1
	2.1 Background	1
	2.2 Topography and Geology	1
	2.3 Archaeological Setting	1
3.	Aims	2
4.	Methods	2
5.	Results	2
6.	Discussion	3
7.	Conclusions	3
8.	Acknowledgements	3
9.	Personnel	3
10.	Bibliography	3
11.	Abbreviations	3

Appendices

1	Context Summary
2	Finds Data, by Hilary Healey
3	The Archive

List of Figures

- Figure 1 . . . General Location Plan
- Figure 2 . . . Site Location Plan
- Figure 3 . . . Development Area Location Plan
- Figure 4 . . . Section Location Plan
- Figure 5 . . . Sections A, B and C

1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of foundation trenches for building extensions at the Church of England Primary School, Ruskington, Lincolnshire.

The site lies in an area of significant archaeological interest. King Street, the major Roman highway, passes through Ruskington and a large Anglo-Saxon cemetery was located at the northwest corner of the village. Additionally, Neolithic flint axes have been found approximately 100m from the present investigation site.

Pottery of Roman, Early Saxon (5th - 7th century AD) and fourteenth century date, together with fragmentary animal bones were recovered. However, no archaeological deposits were encountered.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

In June and July 1993, an archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of foundation trenches at the Church of England Primary School, Ruskington (NGR TF0867050850). This was in respect of a planning application (N52/385/1993) for building extensions at the school. Commissioned by Lincolnshire County Council, this work was carried out by Heritage Lincolnshire in accordance with a brief set by the North Kesteven Community Archaeologist.

2.2 Topography and Geology

Ruskington village is situated

approximately 5km north of Sleaford in the civil parish of Ruskington, North Kesteven District, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1). Local soils are the Ruskington Association, gleyic brown calcareous earths on glaciofluvial sand and gravel with a calcareous substrate containing limestone stones, flints and quartzite pebbles (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 304). The investigation site is located towards the southeastern limit of the township of Ruskington (Fig. 2) at a height of approximately 11m OD.

2.3 Archaeological Setting

Ruskington village is located in an area of archaeological remains dating from the prehistoric through to the medieval period. A Palaeolithic handaxe (NK52.4) was discovered *c.* 400m south of the present investigation area. Flint axes of Neolithic date (NK52.14; NK52.40) have been found approximately 100m from the development site and worked flints (NK52.12) have been recovered from a point 800m to the east.

Passing through the west edge of the village in an approximately north-south direction is the King Street Roman road (NK52.21). Aerial photographs have recorded field systems and enclosures of probable Roman date in the vicinity of King Street (NK52.11; NK52.24; NK52.29; NK52.34). Roman coins have been recovered from various locations within 700m of the construction area (NK52.6, 7, 8, 9).

An Anglo-Saxon cemetery (NK52.1; SMR 60376) was located at the western edge of the village. Iron spearheads, also of Anglo-Saxon date, have been found at several places to the east and southeast of the cemetery (NK52.25; NK52.26).

The Medieval period is represented by All Saints' Church, which contains Early English (c. 1190-1250 AD) elements and a Norman tower arch (Pevsner and Harris 1989, 617), and aspects of the village morphology. Surviving boundaries suggest that the properties on the High Street originated as burgage plots in the medieval period. Pottery of medieval date has been recovered from Manor Street, towards the eastern end of the village.

3. AIMS

The purpose of the archaeological watching brief was to locate and record any archaeological remains exposed during soil and subsoil stripping and following the excavation of the foundation trenches at the Primary School (Fig. 3).

4. METHODS

A mechanical excavator was used in the construction of the foundation trenches, which measured 0.50m wide and averaged 1.00m in depth. See Fig. 4 for a plan of the trenches and location of the recorded sections.

The sides of the trenches were cleaned by hand and inspected for archaeological remains prior to recording the sections. Each archaeological deposit or feature revealed within the foundation trenches was allocated a unique reference number with an individual written description. A photographic record was compiled and sections were drawn at scale 1:20. Additionally, the natural geology was recorded.

5. RESULTS (Fig. 5)

Records of the deposits identified during the watching brief were examined. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them. A total of two phases was identified:

Phase 1	Natural deposits
Phase 2	Modern deposits

Phase 1 Natural Deposits

Limestone with gravel pockets (4) was encountered in the base of Section B. Maintaining a fairly flat level surface, this deposit is interpreted as the natural bedrock. Above the limestone in Section B, and also observed in Section A, was a sandy clay that contained frequent limestone fragments (2). This deposit is considered to be a natural subsoil.

Phase 2 Modern deposits

Observed in the soil stripping and adjacent to the pre-existing school buildings, was a very mixed soil that contained inclusions of brick, concrete and other construction debris (3). This is considered to be a dumped spread or disturbed deposit.

Sealing the area was a dark topsoil (1), generally about 0.35m deep, that constituted the present ground surface. Recovered from spoil deposits excavated from the site were unabraded sherds of Early Saxon and fourteenth century Lincoln type pottery, a worn fragment of Roman greyware pottery and animal bone fragments.

6. DISCUSSION

Natural deposits of limestone and clay subsoil (phase 1) were observed during the watching brief. Directly on to these was a mixed soil (phase 2) containing construction materials relating to previous building work at the school. Topsoil provided the surface of the school playing area. Pottery recovered from the site may imply some otherwise unrecognised medieval activity in the vicinity.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigation at the Church of England Primary School, Ruskington, established that natural deposits consisting of limestone below a clay subsoil occur within 0.5m of the present ground surface. Medieval pottery and fragmentary animal bones were recovered during the watching brief, though no archaeological deposits were encountered.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Heritage Lincolnshire wish to thank Lincolnshire County Council for funding the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis, and particularly their representative, Mr D Calloway. Thanks also to Mr D Cowling of Meldrum Lee and Gillatt for providing copies of site plans. Steve Haynes coordinated the work and Dave Start edited this report. Hilary Healey commented on the finds. Nicola Nuttall, the North Kesteven Community Archaeologist, kindly permitted access to the relevant parish files. Information from the County Sites and Monuments Record was provided by Ian George and Julia Wise of the Archaeology Section, City and County Museum, Lincoln.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Manager: Steve Haynes
Supervisor: David Brown
Finds Processing: Denise Buckley
Post-excavation Analyst: Gary Taylor

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Hodge, C A H, Burton, R G O, Corbett, W M, Evans, R, and Seale, R S, 1984 *Soils and their Use in Eastern England*, Soil Survey of England and Wales Bulletin No. 13

Pevsner, N, and Harris, J, 1989 *Lincolnshire, The Buildings of England* (2nd ed, revised Antram, N)

11. ABBREVIATIONS

Numbers prefixed with 'SMR' are the primary reference numbers used by the Lincolnshire County Sites and Monuments Record.

Numbers prefixed by 'NK' are the reference numbers used by the North Kesteven Community Archaeologist.

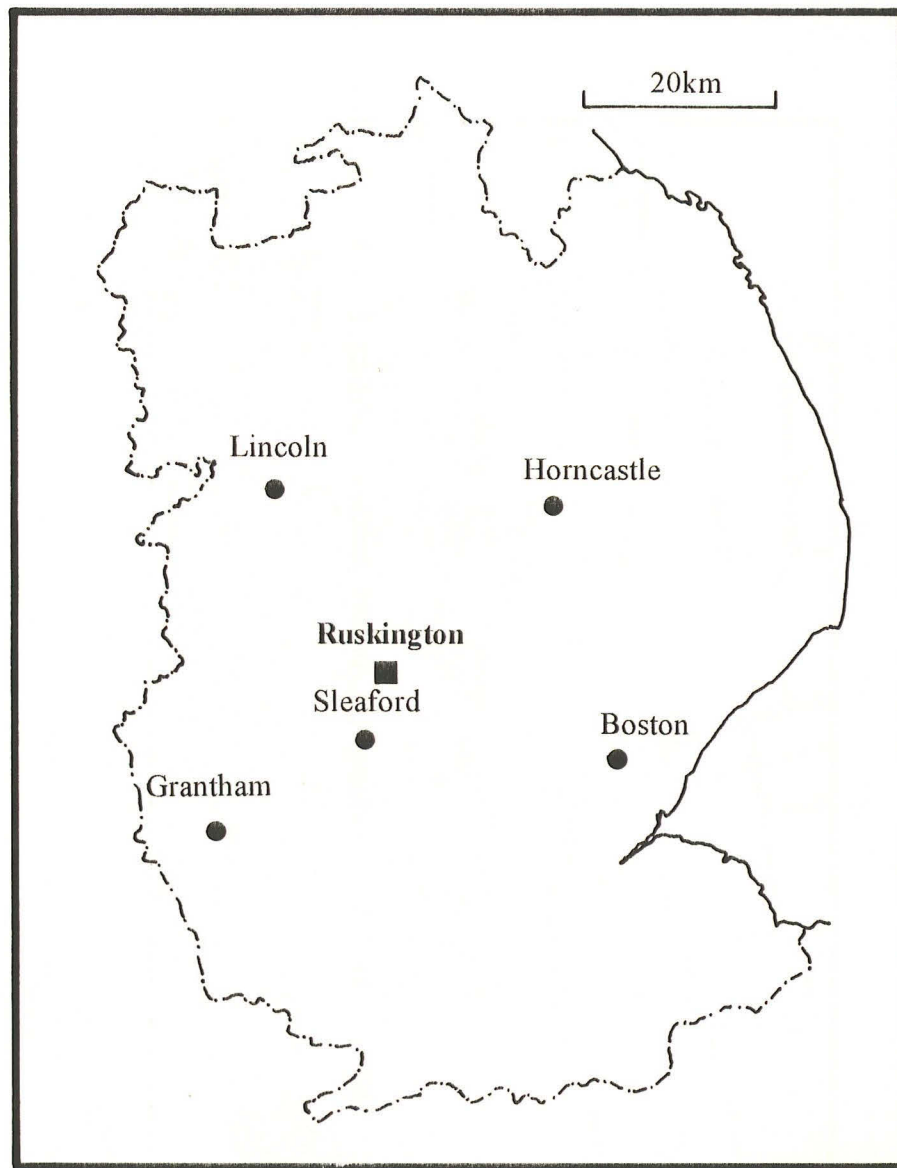
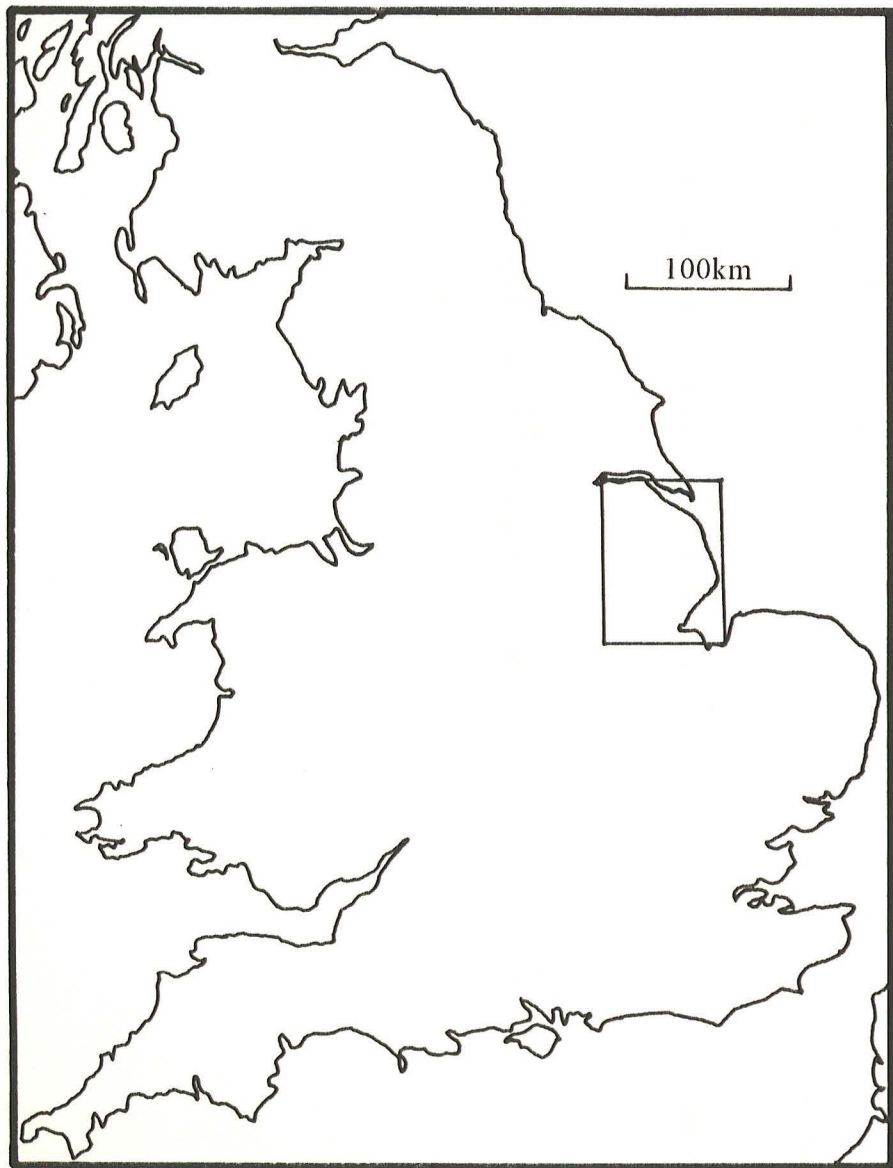


Fig. 1 GENERAL LOCATION PLAN

Fig. 2 SITE LOCATION PLAN

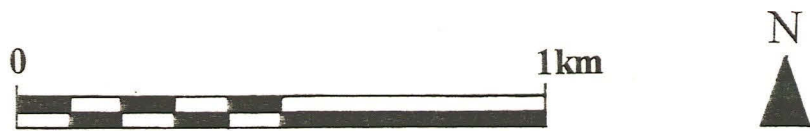


Fig. 3 DEVELOPMENT AREA LOCATION PLAN

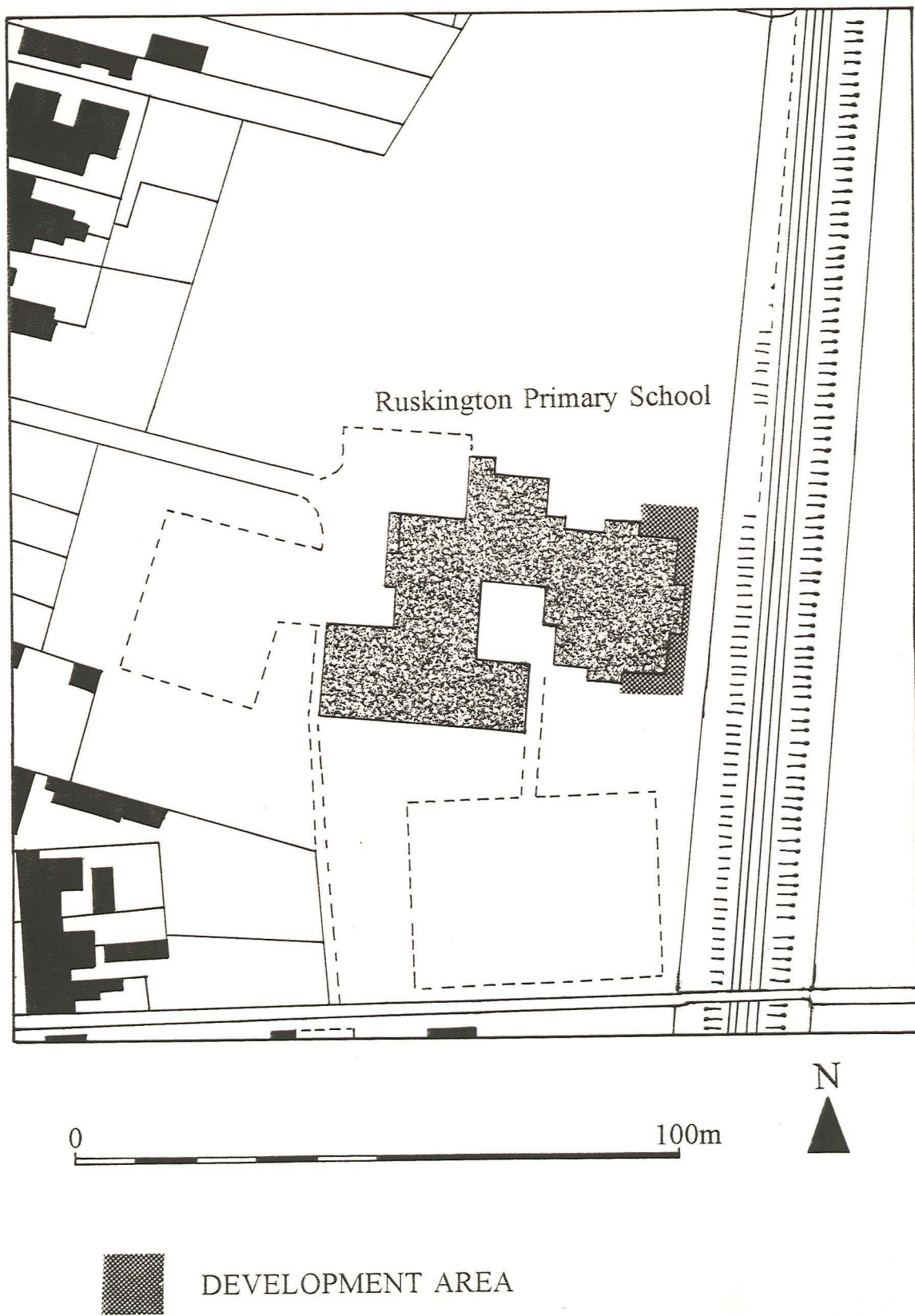


Fig. 4 SECTION LOCATION PLAN

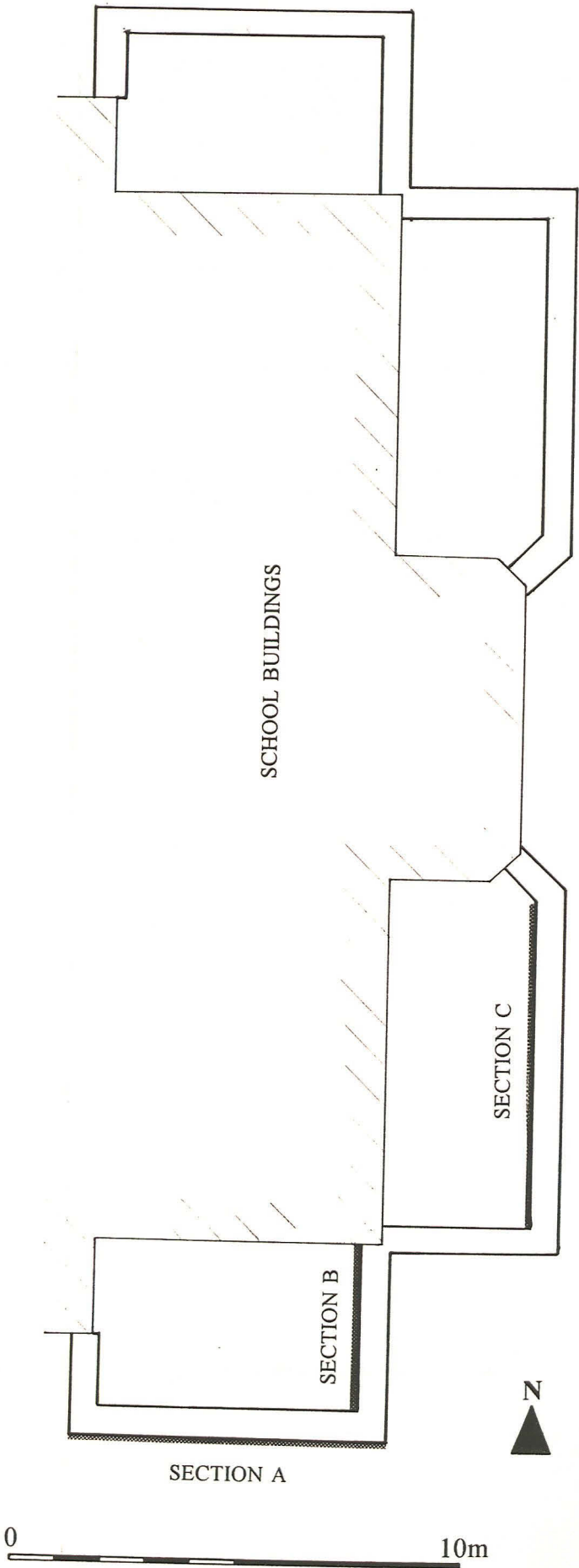
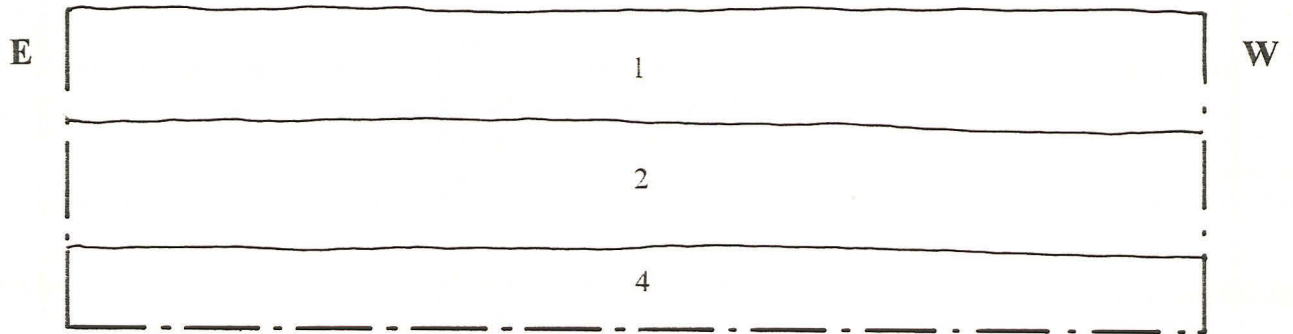
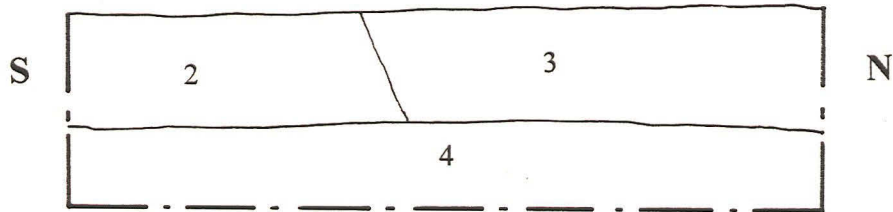


Fig. 5 SECTIONS A, B and C

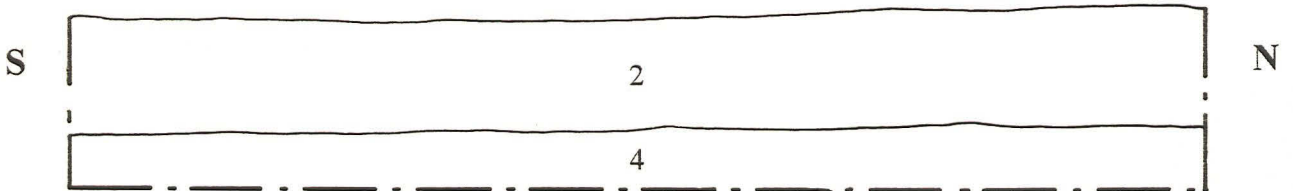
SECTION A



SECTION B



SECTION C



APPENDIX 1

Context Summary

Number	Description	Interpretation
1	Dark brown silty clay with frequent limestone fragments	Topsoil
2	Yellow brown silty clay with very frequent angular limestone	Subsoil
3	Dark grey/brown silty sandy clay with brick, concrete, mortar, gravel and sand pockets	Mixed building debris
4	Limestone with gravel pockets	Natural bedrock

APPENDIX 2

Finds Data, by Hilary Healey

Context

Unstratified

Description

One sherd Romano-British greyware pottery
 One sherd Early Saxon pottery
 Two sherds Lincoln type pottery, 14th century

Unstratified

One cow (*Bos* sp.) tooth
 One animal rib fragment, species unidentified
 One unidentified bone fragment

APPENDIX 3

The archive

The archive consists of:

- 4 Context records
- 1 Photographic records
- 3 Scale drawings
- 1 Box of finds
- 1 Stratigraphic matrix

All primary records and finds are currently kept at:

Heritage Lincolnshire
28 Boston Road
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 7ET

City and County Museum, Lincoln Accession Number: 25.94