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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
OF DEVELOPMENT AT  
MARSH FARM,  
SEA LANE.  
WRANGLE,  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
(WMFA 01)**



**A P S**  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
PROJECT  
SERVICES

Event L12678

Source L17303  
L17304

negative

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
OF DEVELOPMENT AT  
MARSH FARM,  
SEA LANE,  
WRANGLE,  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
(WMFA 01)**

Work Undertaken For  
Staples Brothers Ltd

Report Compiled by  
P. Cope-Faulkner BA (Hons) AIFA

December 2001

Planning Application No: B/01/0281/FULL  
National Grid Reference: TF 4470 5057  
City and County Museum Accession No: 2001.197

A.P.S. Report No: 169/01



Conservation  
Services

21 DEC 2001

Highways & Planning  
Directorate

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## 1. SUMMARY

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the construction of a single dwelling on land at Church End, Wrangle, Lincolnshire. The watching brief monitored the excavation of the foundation trenches associated with the development.*

*Marsh Farm is located in an area of medieval (AD 1066-1500) salterns (salt-production sites) characterised by mounds of waste silts.*

*The investigations revealed a sequence of marine alluvium overlain by topsoil. No archaeological deposits or features were encountered. Finds include a two sherds of 18<sup>th</sup> century pottery, a single sherd of post-medieval pottery and a handmade brick.*

## 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, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed.*' (IFA 1997).

### 2.2 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Staples Brothers Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief during construction of a tractor and implement shed at Marsh Farm, Sea Lane, Wrangle, Lincolnshire. Approval for the development was sought through the submission of planning application B/01/0281/FULL. Permission was granted subject to a standard condition for

archaeological recording. The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a specification designed by Archaeological Project Services and approved by the Boston Community Archaeologist (Appendix 1). The watching brief was undertaken between the 30<sup>th</sup> July and 7<sup>th</sup> August 2001.

### 2.3 Topography and Geology

Wrangle is located 4km from the Lincolnshire coast and 12km northeast of Boston, Boston District, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The development site is located 2.1km east of the village centre as defined by the parish church of St. Mary and St. Nicholas at National Grid Reference TF 4470 5057 (Fig. 2). The site lies within the Wrangle Tofts, reclaimed land created by the dumping of silts from salt-making, at heights of between 4m and 5m OD.

Local soils are of the Romney Series, typically gleyic brown calcareous alluvial soils (Robson 1985, 53). Beneath these soils is a drift geology of younger marine silts and clays.

### 2.4 Archaeological Setting

Wrangle lies within an area of known archaeological remains dating from the Bronze age to the present day. A Bronze Age axe hammer and a number of worked flints have been found around the village (Lane 1993, Gazetteer).

Wrangle is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of c. 1086. Referred to as *Werangle* the name is derived from the Old English *wrengel* or *wrangel* meaning 'a crooked place' (Cameron 1998, 144). At the time of the Domesday Survey the land was held by Count Alan and Guy of Craon and a portion of it was waste due to the action of the sea

(Foster and Longley 1976).

The only extant remains of the medieval period is the church of St. Mary and St. Nicholas which has a 13<sup>th</sup> century doorway and tower but is mainly of 14<sup>th</sup> century date (DoE 1987, 67).

The site is located within Wrangle Tofts, an area of salterns (salt-making sites) whose waste silts have been dumped to form low mounds from the Late Saxon period to the early post-medieval period. Immediately northeast of the site is a saltern mound from which pottery of 15<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> century date was retrieved during extensive fieldwalking undertaken as part of the Fenland Project (Lane 1993, Gazetteer).

### 3. AIMS

The requirements of the watching brief, as described in the specification (Appendix 1), were to record and interpret archaeological deposits, if present, and to determine their date, sequence, function and origin.

### 4. METHODS

Stanchion pits were opened by a mechanical excavator to depths of between 0.9m and 1m as required by the development. Following excavation, the sides of the pits were cleaned and 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 were measured from the ground surface. Each archaeological deposit or feature revealed was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and interpretations appears as Appendix 2. A photographic record was compiled and

sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10. Recording of deposits encountered during the watching brief was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services practice.

Finds recovered from excavated deposits were examined and a period date assigned where possible (Appendix 3). Records of the deposits and features recognised during the watching brief were examined. Phasing was assigned based on artefact dating and the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them.

### 5. RESULTS

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

The earliest deposit encountered was a mid yellowish brown sandy silt (003) identified as the underlying drift geology. This was overlain by a topsoil of greyish brown clayey silt (001), of which a discrete dump of burnt material and fractured bricks was also recorded (004).

Sealing all deposits was a recently laid hardstanding of limestone fragments (001) which was between 0.3m and 0.48m thick.

### 6. DISCUSSION

A deposit of sandy silt was the earliest layer encountered during the watching brief. This relates to the underlying drift geology and can be identified as marine alluvium. These were sealed by topsoil. No archaeological features were encountered and none of the deposits have characteristics that relate to salterns.

Finds retrieved during this investigation

include a post-medieval brick and pottery sherd and two 18<sup>th</sup> century pottery fragments. Such finds, derived from the topsoil may represent nothing more than discarded rubbish.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigations were carried out on land at Marsh Farm, Sea Lane, Wrangle, because the site lay in close proximity to medieval salt-production sites.

A sequence of natural deposits overlain by topsoil and modern hardstanding was recorded. No archaeological features or deposits were encountered.

Finds retrieved during the investigation include post-medieval pottery and handmade brick fragments. No waterlogged features were found which indicates that few environmental indicators (snails, seeds, pollen *etc.*) will survive other than through charring.

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services would like to acknowledge the assistance of Mr V. Reed of Staples Brothers Ltd who commissioned the fieldwork and post excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Steve Malone and this report was edited by Tom Lane. Rebecca Wilcox, the Boston Borough Community Archaeologist, kindly permitted access to the library and parish files maintained by the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire.

## 9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Steve Malone  
Supervisors: James Albone, Rachael Hall,

Jim Snee  
Finds Processing: Denise Buckley  
Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner  
Photographic Reproduction: Sue Unsworth  
Post-excavation Analyst: Paul Cope-Faulkner

## 10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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DoE, 1987, *List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest: Borough of Boston*

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## 11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services  
DoE Department of the Environment  
IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

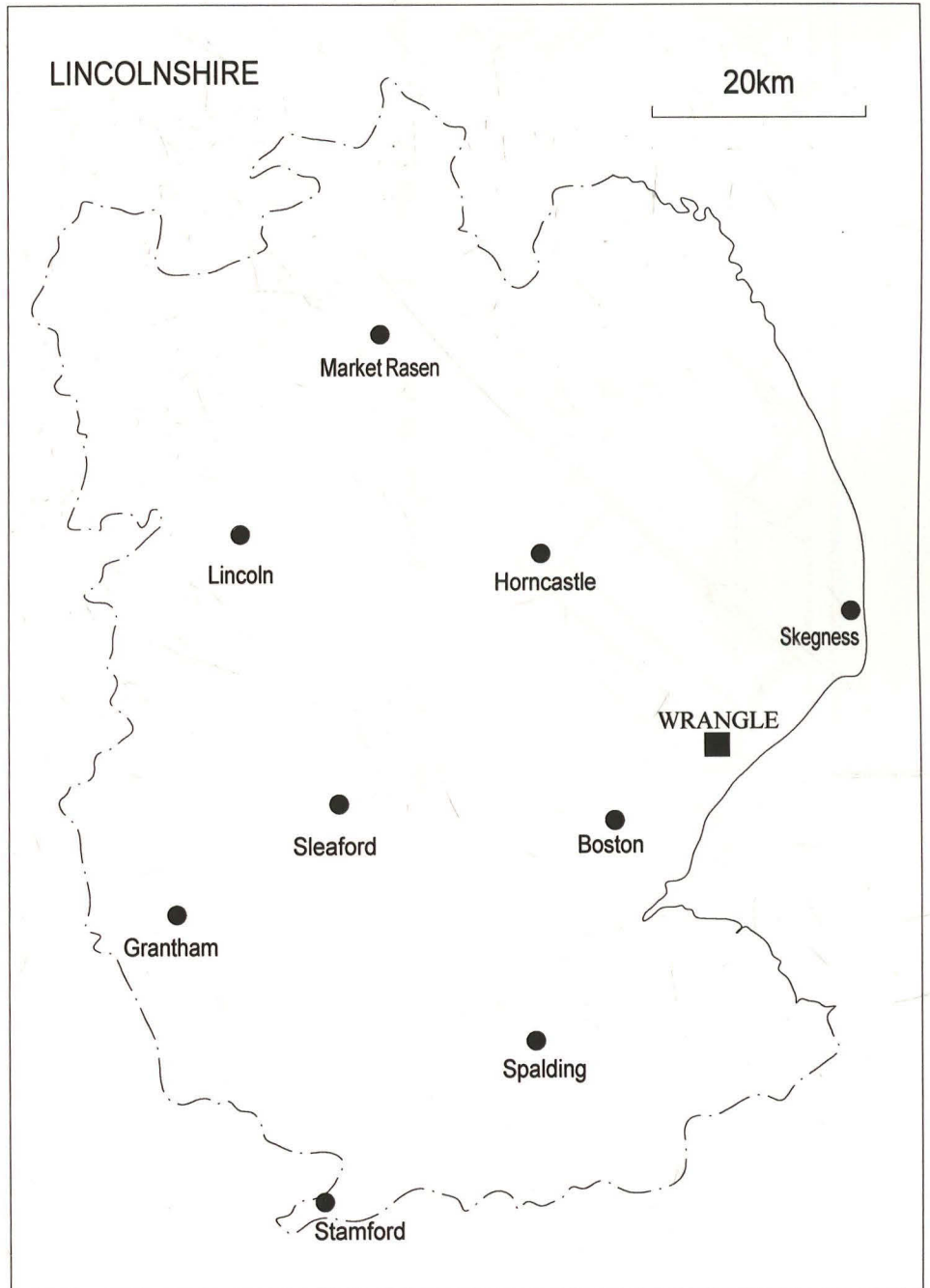
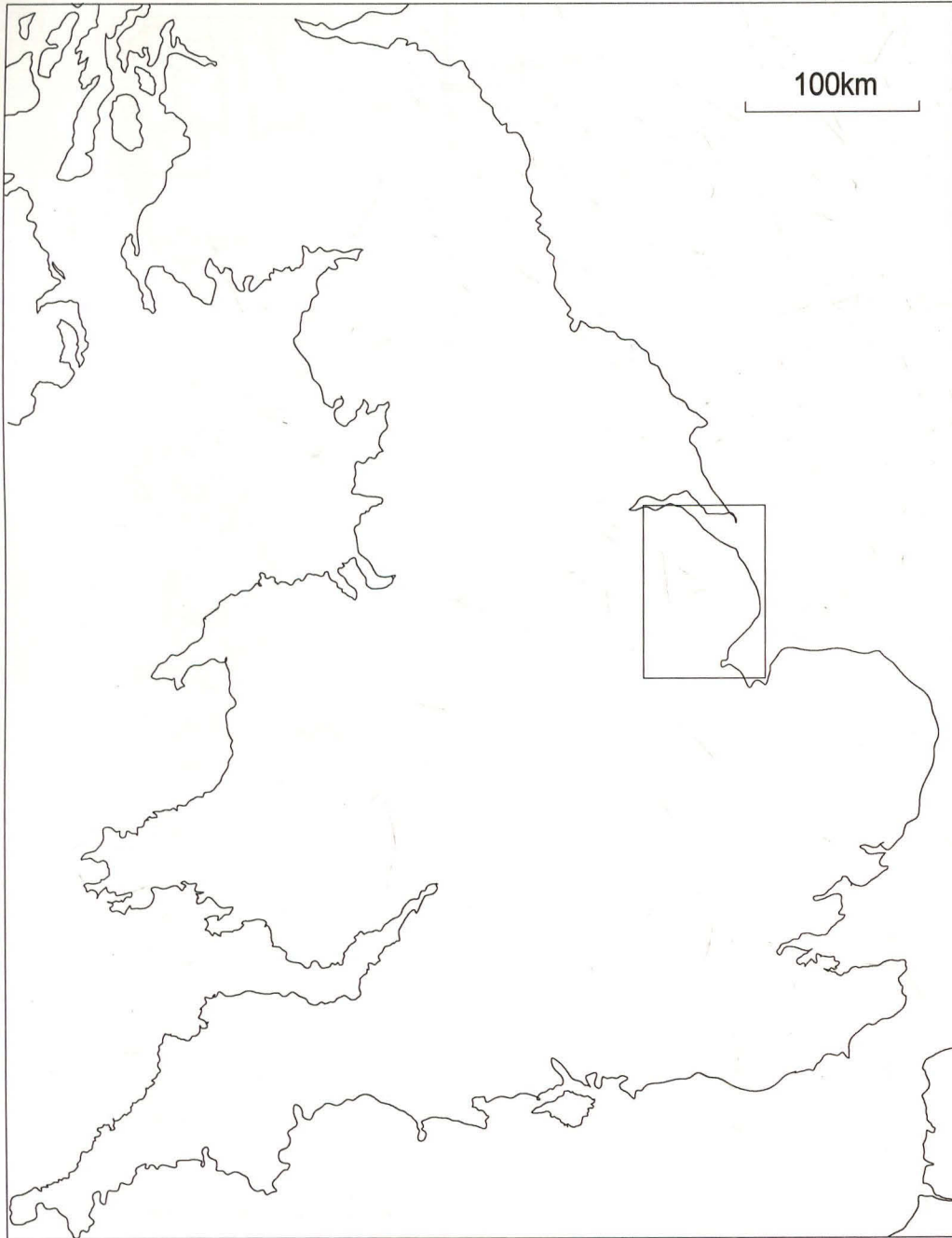


Figure 1 General Location Plan



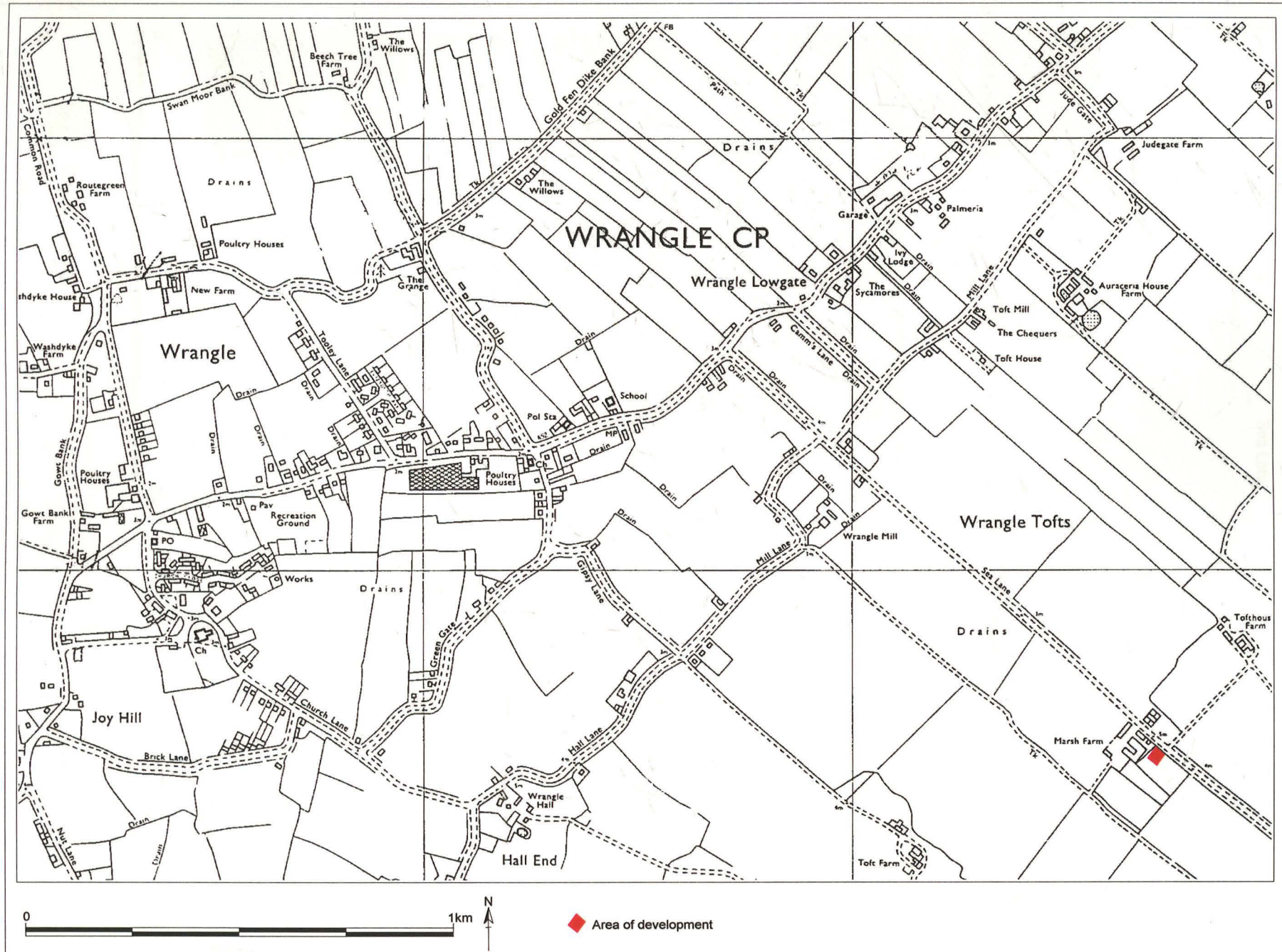


Figure 2 - Site location plan

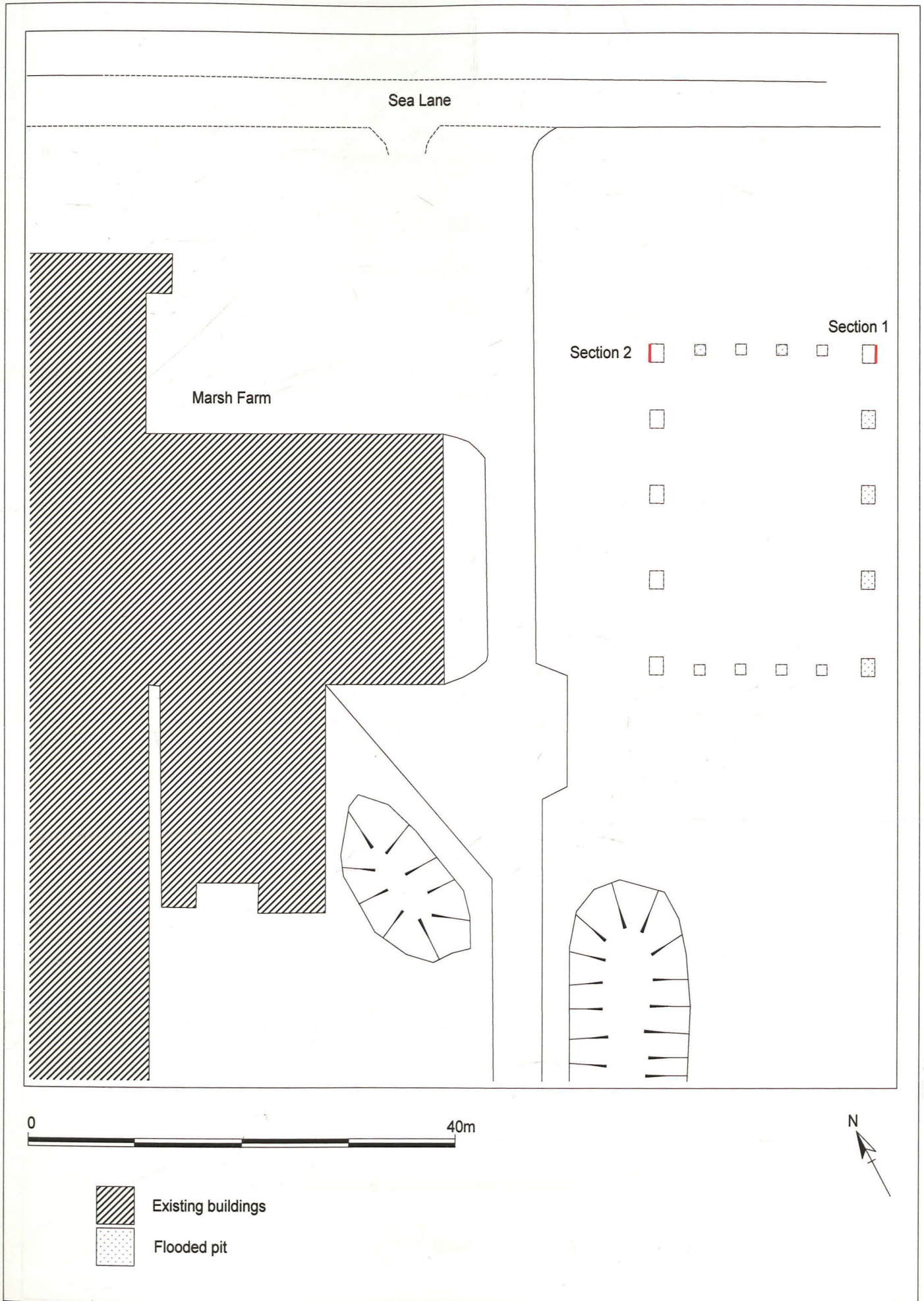


Figure 3 - Plan of the development showing section locations

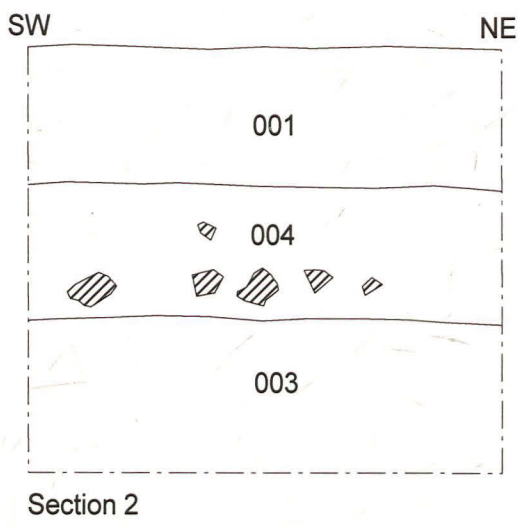
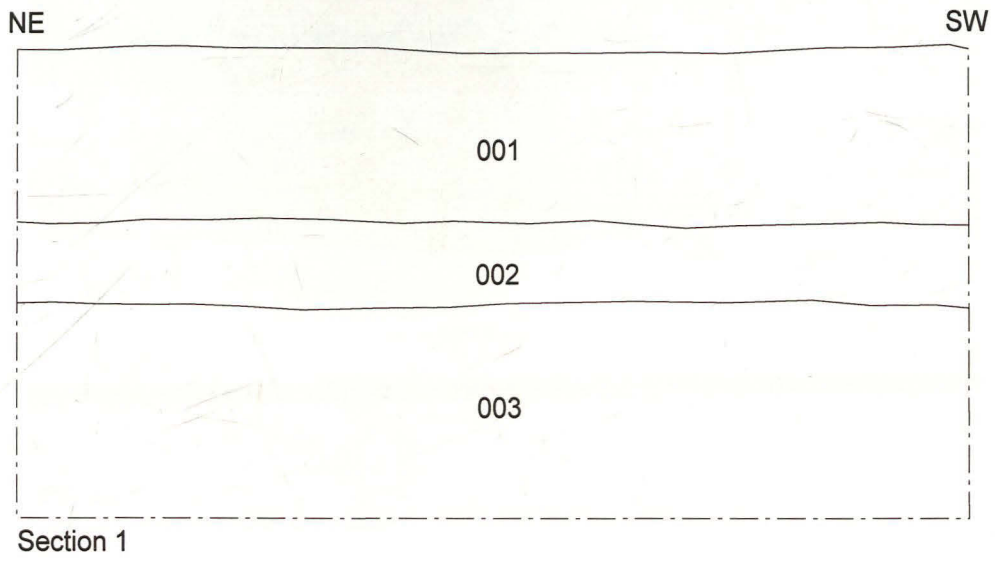


Figure 4 - Sections 1 and 2



Plate 1 - General view of the development area, looking west



Plate 2 - Section 1, looking southeast

## Appendix 1

### LAND AT MARSH FARM, WRANGLE, LINCOLNSHIRE - SPECIFICATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

#### 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 *A watching brief is required during construction of a tractor and implement shed at Marsh Farm, Wrangle, Lincolnshire.*
- 1.2 *The site is archaeologically sensitive, lying close to a possible medieval saltern.*
- 1.3 *The archaeological work will consist of a watching brief during development works on the site.*
- 1.4 *On completion of the fieldwork a report will be prepared detailing the results of the watching brief. The report will consist of a narrative supported by illustrations and photographs.*

#### 2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This document comprises a specification for archaeological watching brief during construction of a tractor and implement shed on land at Marsh Farm, Sea Lane, Wrangle, Lincolnshire. The site is located at National Grid Reference TF 4471 5055.
- 2.2 This document contains the following parts:
  - 2.2.1 Overview.
  - 2.2.2 Stages of work and methodologies.
  - 2.2.3 List of specialists.
  - 2.2.4 Programme of works and staffing structure of the project

#### 3 SITE LOCATION

- 3.1 Wrangle is located approximately 4km from the Lincolnshire coast and 12.5km northeast of Boston, in the administrative district of Boston. Marsh Farm lies approximately 2km east of the village. It is centred on National Grid Reference TF 4471 5055.

#### 4 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 4.1 A planning application (B/01/0281/FULL) was submitted to Boston Borough Council for the construction of a tractor and implement shed. Permission is subject to a condition requiring the undertaking of a watching-brief during groundworks associated with the development.

#### 5 SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 5.1 Marsh Farm lies to the east of Wrangle village at approximately 4m OD. Local soils are the Wisbech Association, mainly coarse silty calcareous soils developed on marine alluvium (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 361).

#### 6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

- 6.1 Wrangle lies in an area of known archaeological remains, a number of sites and finds spots dating from the prehistoric period through to the medieval period have been identified together with Iron Age and Romano-British salterns. Wrangle is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey (1086). The church of St Mary and St Nicholas is believed to date from the 14<sup>th</sup> century or earlier.
- 6.2 Marsh Farm lies in the Wrangle Tofts, reclaimed land created from the Late Saxon period onwards by the dumping of silts taken from the unreclaimed marsh for saltmaking. A distinct mound is visible

at Marsh Farm with associated 15th-17th century pottery indicating that the location was probably the site of a late medieval saltern further evidence for which may be uncovered during the course of development.

## 7 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

7.1 The aims of the watching brief will be:

7.1.1 To record and interpret the archaeological features exposed during the excavation of the foundation trenches and other areas of ground disturbance.

7.2 The objectives of the watching brief will be to:

7.2.1 Determine the form and function of the archaeological features encountered;

7.2.2 Determine the spatial arrangement of the archaeological features encountered;

7.2.3 As far as practicable, recover dating evidence from the archaeological features, and

7.2.4 Establish the sequence of the archaeological remains present on the site.

## 8 SITE OPERATIONS

### 8.1 General considerations

8.1.1 All work will be undertaken following statutory Health and Safety requirements in operation at the time of the watching brief.

8.1.2 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.

8.1.3 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.

### 8.2 Methodology

8.2.1 The watching brief will be undertaken during the ground works phase of development, and includes the archaeological monitoring of all phases of soil movement.

8.2.2 Stripped areas and stanchion pit 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.

8.2.3 Any finds recovered will be bagged and labelled for later analysis.

8.2.4 Throughout the watching brief a photographic record will be compiled. The photographic record will consist of:

- the site during work to show specific stages, and the layout of the archaeology within the trench.
- groups of features where their relationship is important

8.2.5 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

### 9.1 Stage 1

9.1.1 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 and labelled, the labelling referring to schedules identifying the subject/s photographed.

9.1.2 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.

### 9.2 Stage 2

9.2.1 Detailed examination of the stratigraphic matrix to enable the determination of the various phases of activity on the site.

9.2.2 Finds will be sent to specialists for identification and dating.

### 9.3 Stage 3

9.3.1 On completion of stage 2, a report detailing the findings of the watching brief will be prepared.

9.3.2 This will consist of:

- A non-technical summary of the results of the investigation.
- A description of the archaeological setting of the watching brief.
- Description of the topography of the site.
- Description of the methodologies used during the watching brief.
- A text describing the findings of the watching brief.
- A consideration of the local, regional and national context of the watching brief findings.
- Plans of the archaeological features exposed. If a sequence of archaeological deposits is encountered, separate plans for each phase will be produced.
- Sections of the archaeological features.
- Interpretation of the archaeological features exposed, and their chronology and setting within the surrounding landscape.
- Specialist reports on the finds from the site.
- Appropriate photographs of the site and specific archaeological features.

## 10 REPORT DEPOSITION

10.1 Copies of the report will be sent to the Client; the Boston Borough Council Community Archaeologist; Boston Borough Council Planning Department; and to the County Council Archaeological Sites and Monuments Record.

## 11 ARCHIVE

- 11.1 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

- 12.1 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: *Medieval Archaeology* and the *Journal of the Medieval Settlement Research Group* for findings of medieval or later date; and *Britannia* for discoveries of Roman date.

## 13 CURATORIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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

## 14 VARIATIONS

- 14.1 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

- 15.1 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.
- 15.2 An archaeological supervisor with experience of watching briefs will undertake the work.
- 15.3 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

- 16.1 The following organisations/persons will, in principle 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 - G Taylor, APS in consultation with H Healey, Independent Archaeologist



Non-pottery Artefacts	J Cowgill, Independent Specialist
Animal Bones	Environmental Archaeology Consultancy
Environmental Analysis	J Rackham, Independent Specialist
Human Remains Analysis	R Gowland, Independent Specialist

## 17 INSURANCES

- 17.1 Archaeological Project Services, as part of the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire, maintains Employers Liability Insurance of £10,000,000, together with Public and Products Liability insurances, each with indemnity of £5,000,000. Copies of insurance documentation can be supplied on request.

## 18 COPYRIGHT

- 18.1 Archaeological Project Services shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project Specification.
- 18.2 Licence will also be given to the archaeological curators to use the documentary archive for educational, public and research purposes.
- 18.3 In the case of non-satisfactory settlement of account then copyright will remain fully and exclusively with Archaeological Project Services. In these circumstances it will be an infringement under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 for the client to pass any report, partial report, or copy of same, to any third party. Reports submitted in good faith by Archaeological Project Services to any Planning Authority or archaeological curator will be removed from said planning Authority and/or archaeological curator. The Planning Authority and/or archaeological curator will be notified by Archaeological Project Services that the use of any such information previously supplied constitutes an infringement under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 and may result in legal action.
- 18.4 The author of any report or specialist contribution to a report shall retain intellectual copyright of their work and may make use of their work for educational or research purposes or for further publication.

## 19 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

Lane, T, 1993 *The Fenland project number 8: Lincolnshire survey, the northern Fen-edge*, East Anglian Archaeology 66

## Appendix 2

### CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Description	Interpretation
001	Compacted white and grey limestone rubble, 0.48m thick	Hardstanding
002	Firm dark greyish brown clayey silt, 0.18m thick	Topsoil
003	Firm mid yellowish brown sandy silt, >0.45m thick	Natural deposit
004	Firm dark greyish brown clayey silt with frequent charcoal and fractured brick, 0.27m thick	Topsoil

## Appendix 3

### THE FINDS

*Hilary Healey and Gary Taylor*

#### Provenance

All the material was recovered from topsoil (002) and (004).

The brick is likely to have been made locally in the Wrangle area, though the pottery is perhaps from Staffordshire.

#### Range

A total of five items weighing 567g was recovered. The range of material is detailed in the table.

Pottery of probable 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century date is the earliest material recovered and is associated with brick that may be contemporary. Further pottery of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century was also collected but no faunal remains were retrieved.

Context	Description	Weight (g)	Context Date
002	1x pearlware, blue painted shell-edged plate rim, late 18 <sup>th</sup> century	2g	late 18 <sup>th</sup> century
	1x red painted earthenware, black glazed all over, rim of upright/enclosed vessel, 18 <sup>th</sup> century	55g	
004	1x Boston/Bolingbroke-type ?cistern, glazed olive green/orange internally and externally, ?16 <sup>th</sup> -17 <sup>th</sup> century	27g	post-medieval, ?16 <sup>th</sup> -17 <sup>th</sup> century
	2x handmade brick, 51mm and 61mm thick, thinly mortar covered, post-medieval	483g	

The two handmade bricks from (004) are post-medieval. Although not closely dateable, they appear to be less regular in form compared to 19<sup>th</sup> century handmade brick, and are therefore likely to be earlier. It is probable that they are broadly contemporary with the pottery from the same context. The two fragments of brick do not link but are very similar in character and could be part of the same piece.

#### Condition

All the material is in good condition and present no long-term storage problems. Archive storage of the collection is by material class.

#### Documentation

There have been numerous previous archaeological investigations at Wrangle, but not in the vicinity of the present site. The parish has also been the subject of detailed archaeological study (Lane 1993). Details of archaeological sites and discoveries in the area are maintained in the files of the Boston Community Archaeologist and the Lincolnshire County Council Sites and Monuments Record.

#### Potential

As a small, mixed group the assemblage has limited local potential but suggests indeterminate post-medieval, 16<sup>th</sup>-late 18<sup>th</sup> century, activity in the area. However, the assemblage derives from the modern topsoil.

#### References

Lane, T. W., 1993 *The Fenland Project Number 8: Lincolnshire Survey, the Northern Fen-Edge*, East Anglian Archaeology 66

## Appendix 4

### GLOSSARY

<b>Bronze Age</b>	A period characterised by the introduction of bronze into the country for tools, between 2250 and 800 BC.
<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>Dumped deposits</b>	These are deposits, often laid down intentionally, that raise a land surface. They may be the result of casual waste disposal or may be deliberate attempts to raise the ground surface.
<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>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.
<b>Saltern</b>	Salt producing site typified by ash, derived from fuel needed to evaporate sea water, and briquetage.
<b>Saxon</b>	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 410-1066 when England was largely settled by tribes from northern Germany.

## Appendix 5

### THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

4	Context records
2	Scale drawings (sections)
1	Photographic record sheet
1	Bag of finds
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 Museum Accession Number: 2001.197

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: WMFA 01

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.

Archaeological Project Services shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project Specification.