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**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
OF DEVELOPMENT ON LAND AT
THE NURSERIES,
ROWSTON, (PLOT2)
LINCOLNSHIRE
(RTN 00)**



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ARCHAEOLOGICAL
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**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
OF DEVELOPMENT ON LAND AT
THE NURSERIES,
ROWSTON, (PLOT2)
LINCOLNSHIRE
(RTN 00)**

Work Undertaken For
Headley Homes

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

January 2002

Planning Application No: N/50/0223/96
National Grid Reference: TF 0850 5635
City and County Museum Accession No: 2000.105

A.P.S. Report No: 6/02



Conservation
Services

04 FEB 2002

Highways & Planning
Directorate

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1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the construction of two dwellings and an associated service trench on land at The Nurseries, Rowston, Lincolnshire. The watching brief monitored the excavation of the groundworks associated with the development.

A Neolithic (4200-2250 BC) stone axe and a Bronze Age (2250-800 BC) spearhead are known from the vicinity of the village and attest to occupation in this area during prehistory. Romano-British (AD 50-410) finds are also recorded in the vicinity as is a Late Saxon (AD 850-1066) stone grave cover. The site lies at the centre of the medieval (AD 1066-1500) village.

The investigations revealed a sequence of natural geology, subsoil and topsoil. A single sherd of Early Saxon (AD 450-650) pottery was recovered.

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 Headley Homes to undertake an archaeological watching brief during construction of two dwellings and the excavation of a service trench on land at The Nurseries, Rowston, Lincolnshire. Approval

for the development was sought through the submission of planning application N/50/0223/96. 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 Heritage Officer for North Kesteven District Council (Appendix 1). The watching brief was undertaken between the 25th April and 26th October 2000.

2.3 Topography and Geology

Rowston is located 10km north of Sleaford and 19km southeast of Lincoln, North Kesteven District, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The development site is located 100m east of the village centre as defined by the parish church of St. Clement at National Grid Reference TF 0850 5635 (Fig. 2). The site is situated at a height of c. 18m on land that slopes gently down towards the east and the Witham valley.

Local soils are of the Aswarby Association, generally fine loamy gleyic brown calcareous earths (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 99). These soils overlie a solid geology of Jurassic Cornbrash (BGS 1973).

2.4 Archaeological Setting

Rowston is located in an area of known archaeological remains dating from the Neolithic to the present day. A Neolithic stone axe is known from the parish and a Bronze Age spearhead has also been recorded.

Romano-British finds from Rowston comprise pottery from the immediate vicinity of the development area and a coin of Constantine I (AD 306-337) from the east of the village.

Located within the church are three fragments of Anglo-Saxon sculpture, probably of a single grave cover, dating to between the mid 10th and early 11th century (Everson and Stocker 1999, 242).

Rowston is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of c. 1086. Referred to as *Rouestune* the name is derived from the Old Scandinavian personal name *Hrolfr* or *Rolfr* with the Old English suffix *tūn*, meaning village or farmstead (Cameron 1998, 103). At the time of the Domesday Survey, the land was held by Geoffrey Alselin and contained 150 acres of meadow (Foster and Longley 1976).

Extant remains of the medieval period are restricted to the church of St. Clement, which is Norman in origin, and a 14th century stone cross in the centre of the village (Pevsner and Harris 1989, 615). To the west of the village are a series of earthworks comprising a moat with associated fishponds.

Two previous watching briefs have been undertaken at The Nurseries. The first, of Plot 4, identified two undated intercutting boundary ditches (Snee 2001a, 1). The second, of Plot 5, also identified an undated boundary ditch and two pits (Snee 2001b, 1).

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

Trenches were opened by a mechanical excavator to depths of 1.4m along the

service trench and between 0.6m and 0.8m within the house plots. Following excavation, the sides of the trenches 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. 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 deposits encountered varied from yellow limestone (002), limestone and clay (003) and yellowish brown limestone and sand (006 and 009). These deposits represent the weathered upper surface of the underlying solid geology.

Subsoil, comprising yellowish brown silt (005 and 008) was evident across the western part of the site but was absent from the service trench along the access road. A

sherd of Early Saxon pottery was recovered from subsoil (005).

Sealing all deposits was a topsoil which varied from a 0.5m thick brown silty clay (001) to a brown silt (004 and 007) that measured up to 0.25m thick.

6. DISCUSSION

Deposits of limestone, sands and clay (Phase 1) were the earliest layers encountered during the watching brief. These relate to the underlying solid geology of Jurassic Cornbrash. A subsoil and topsoil had then developed upon the natural deposits. The absence of boundary ditches, which were present in plots 4 and 5 may indicate that this part of the Nurseries was previously open ground.

A single sherd of Early Saxon pottery and two fragments of clinker were retrieved from subsoil and topsoil deposits. As such, they may represent nothing more than discarded rubbish later incorporated into the soil.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigations were carried out on land at The Nurseries, Rowston, because the site lies within the core of medieval settlement.

A sequence of natural geology, subsoil and topsoil was identified. No archaeological features or deposits were identified. A sherd of Early Saxon date and two fragments of clinker were retrieved. 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 J. Hipkin of Headley Homes who commissioned the fieldwork and post excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Denise Drury and this report was edited by Tom Lane. Jo Hambly, the North Kesteven Heritage Officer, kindly permitted access to the parish files maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire. Hilary Healey kindly commented upon the pottery.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Denise Drury
Supervisors: Mark Dymond, Tobin Rayner, Fiona Walker
Site Assistant: Andy Failes
Finds Processing: Denise Buckley
Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner
Photographic Reproduction: Sue Unsworth
Post-excavation Analyst: Paul Cope-Faulkner

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11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services

BGS British Geological Survey

IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

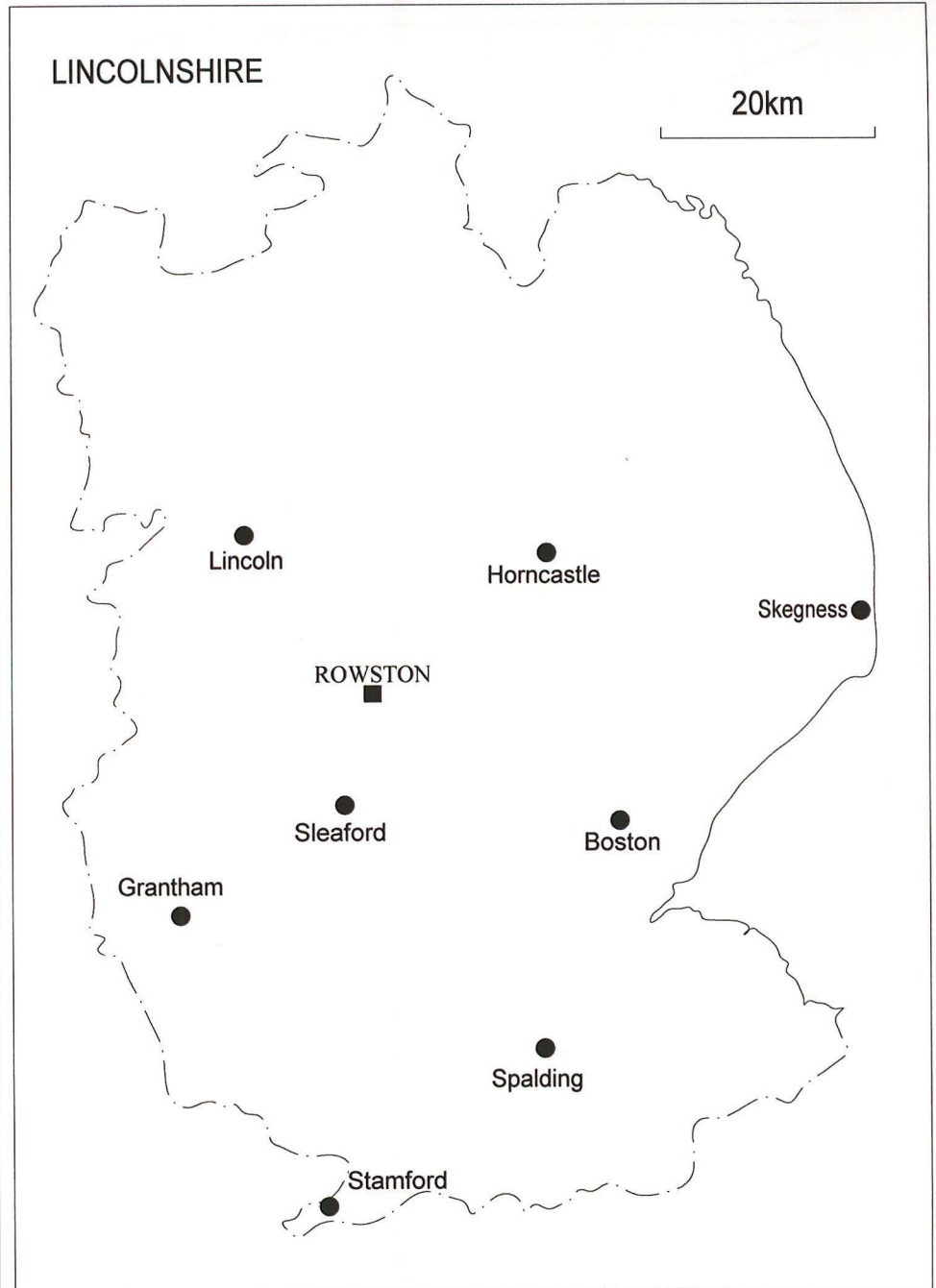
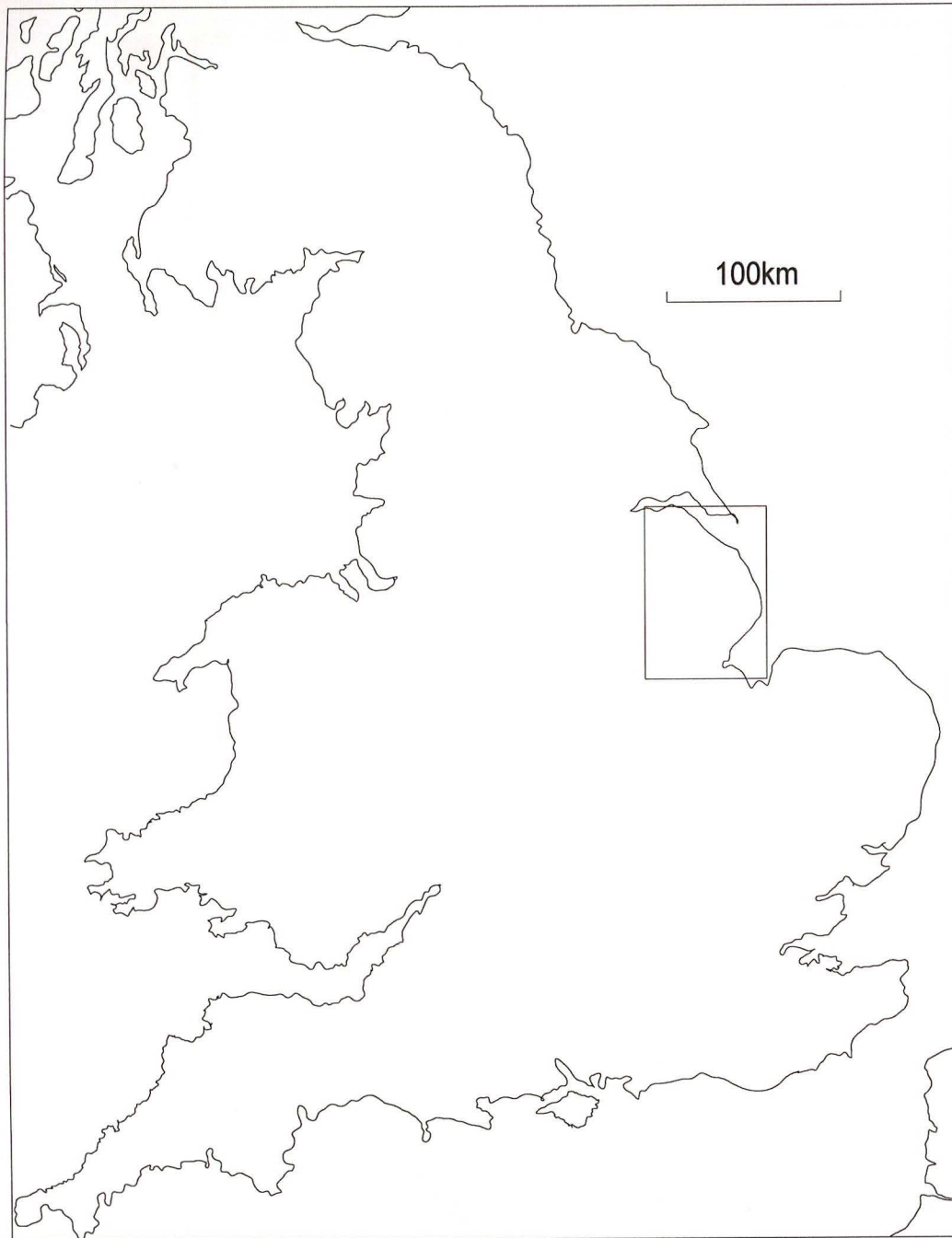


Figure 1 - General Location Plan

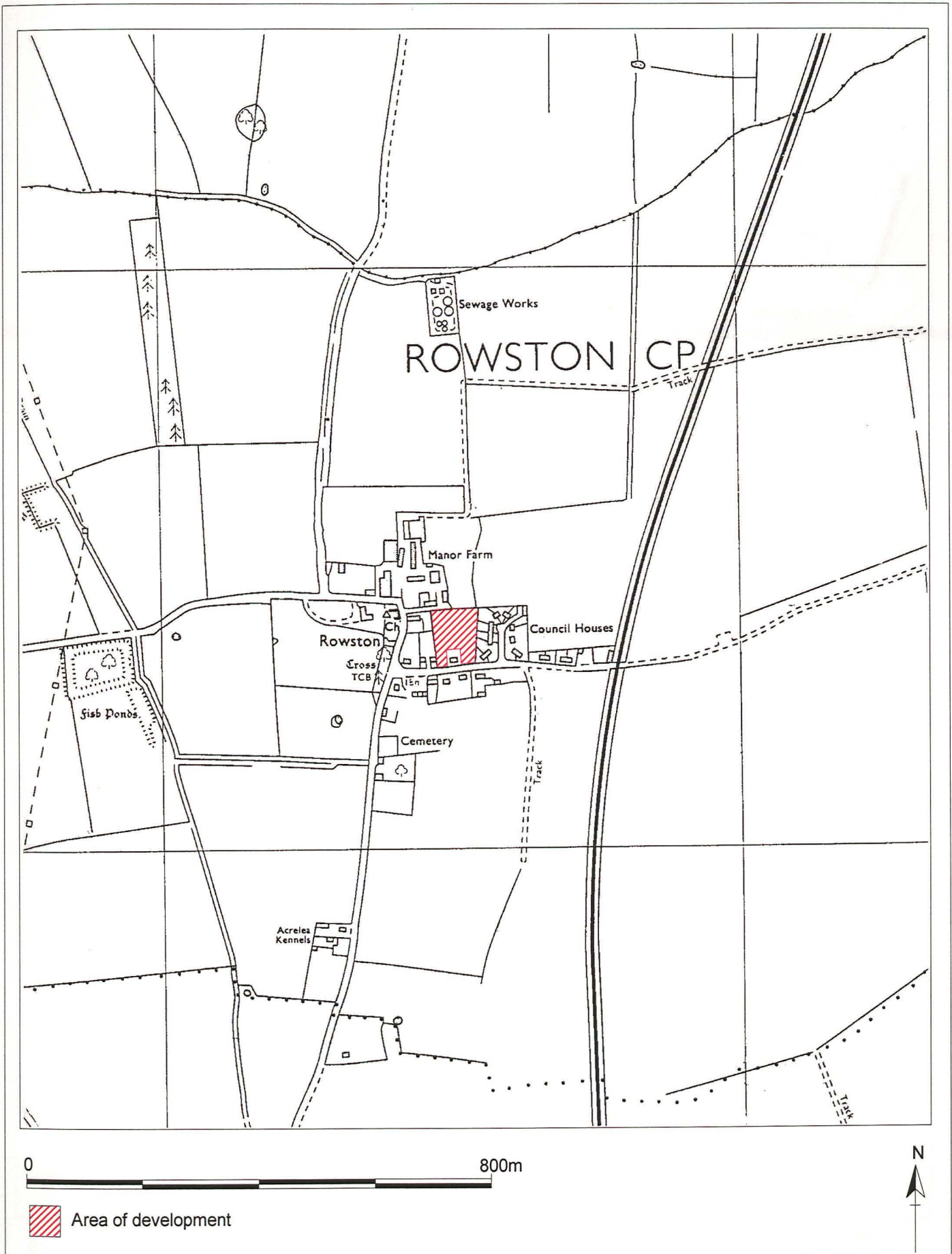


Figure 2 - Site location plan

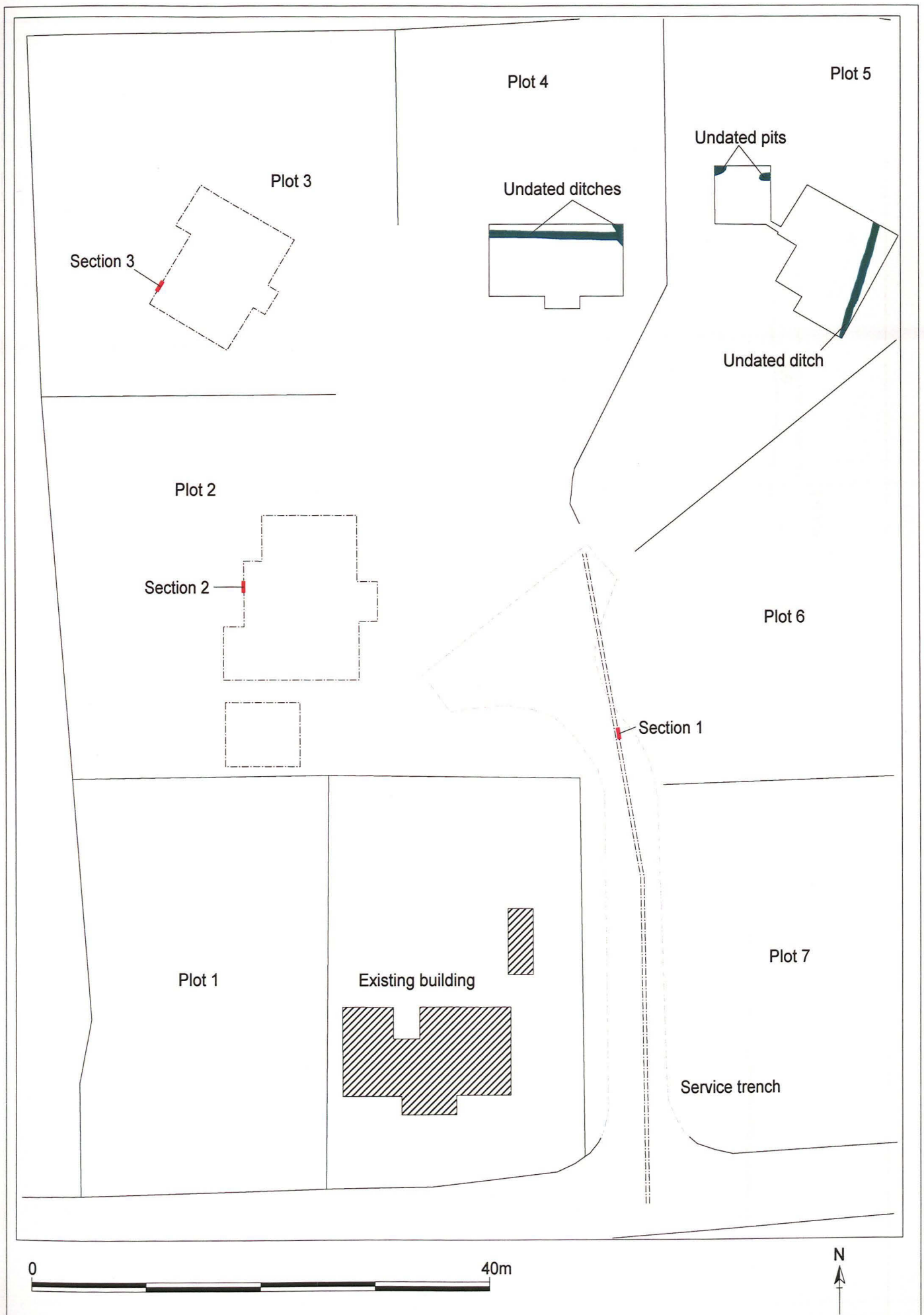
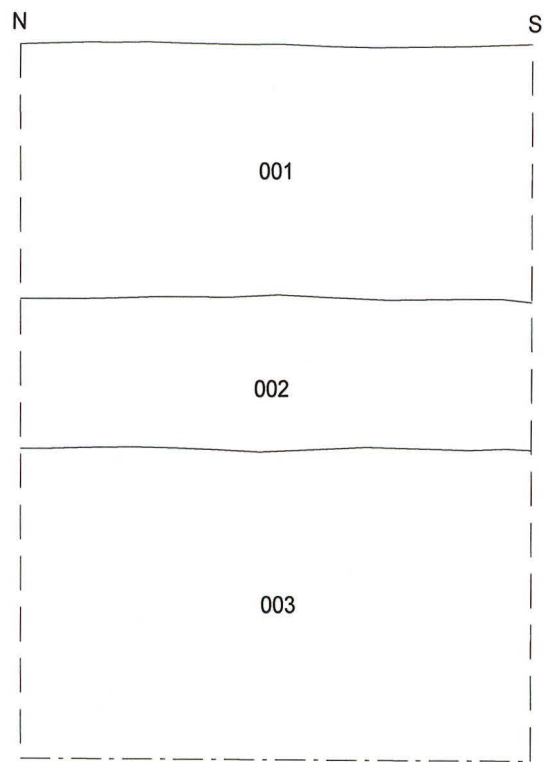
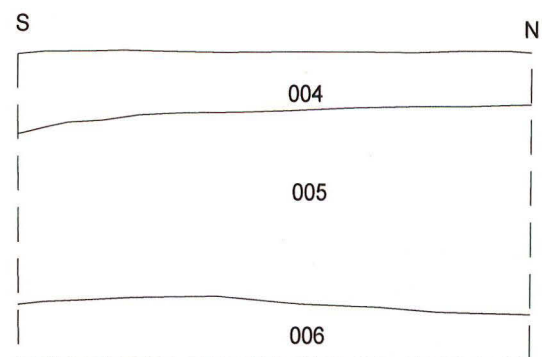


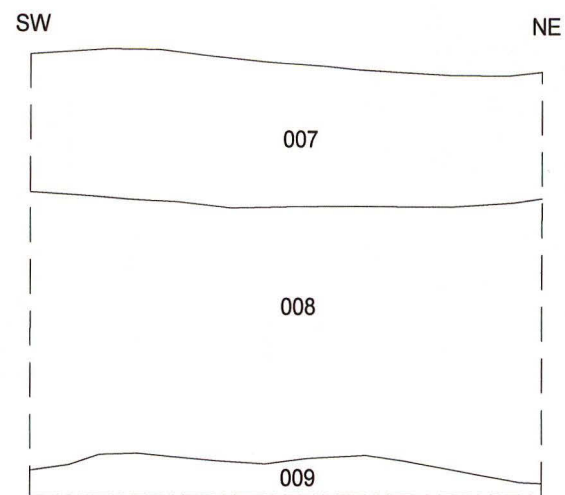
Figure 3 - Plan of the development showing section locations



Section 1



Section 2



Section 3

Figure 4 - Sections 1, 2 and 3



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



Plate 2 - Section 2, looking west



Plate 3 - Section 3, looking northwest

Appendix 1

LAND AT THE NURSERIES, ROWSTON, LINCOLNSHIRE - SPECIFICATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 *A watching brief is required during residential development on land at The Nurseries, Rowston, Lincolnshire.*
- 1.2 *The development site lies in the core of the medieval village of Rowston where finds of Roman and medieval date have been discovered.*
- 1.3 *The watching brief will be undertaken during groundworks associated with the development. The archaeological features exposed will be recorded in writing, graphically and photographically.*
- 1.4 *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

- 2.1 This document comprises a specification for an archaeological watching brief during development on land at The Nurseries, Rowston, Lincolnshire. The site is located at national grid reference TF 0850 5635.
- 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 Rowston lies approximately 9km north of Sleaford in the administrative district of North Kesteven. The site lies in the centre of Rowston village, approximately 150m to the east of the church, at national grid reference TF 0850 5635.

4 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 4.1 A planning application (N/50/0223/96) was submitted to North Kesteven District Council for a residential development on 0.68ha of Rowston nurseries land. The application is subject to a condition requiring the implementation of an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks associated with the development.

5 SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 5.1 The site lies in the centre of Rowston village at approximately 18m OD. Local soils are the Aswarby Association, gleyic brown calcareous earths (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 99).

6 THE ARCHAEOLOGY

- 6.1 The site lies in the core of the medieval village of Rowston approximately 150m east of the Norman church and medieval cross. Sherds of Roman pottery have been discovered at the site of the nursery. Roman and medieval remains may be disturbed by the groundworks associated by the 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 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.

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

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

8.2.4.1 The site during work to show specific stages, and the layout of the archaeology within the trench.

8.2.4.2 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: the colour prints will be 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:

9.3.2.1 A non-technical summary of the results of the investigation.

9.3.2.2 A description of the archaeological setting of the watching brief.

9.3.2.3 Description of the topography of the site.

9.3.2.4 Description of the methodologies used during the watching brief.

9.3.2.5 A text describing the findings of the watching brief.

9.3.2.6 A consideration of the local, regional and national context of the watching brief findings.

9.3.2.7 Plans of the archaeological features exposed. If a sequence of archaeological deposits is encountered, separate plans for each phase will be produced.

9.3.2.8 Sections of the archaeological features.

9.3.2.9 Interpretation of the archaeological features exposed, and their chronology and setting within the surrounding landscape.

9.3.2.10 Specialist reports on the finds from the site.

9.3.2.11 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 North Kesteven Heritage Officer; North Kesteven District 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: *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

- 13.1 Curatorial responsibility for the archaeological work undertaken on the site lies with the Heritage Officer of North Kesteven District Council. 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 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**

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Appendix 2

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Description	Interpretation
001	Firm dark brown silty clay, 0.5m thick	Topsoil
002	Indurated limestone, 0.3m thick	Natural deposit
003	Indurated yellow limestone and clay, >0.6m thick	Natural deposit
004	Firm dark brown silt, >0.15m thick	Topsoil
005	Friable mid yellowish brown silt, 0.4m thick	Subsoil
006	Firm mid yellowish brown limestone and sand, >0.12m thick	Natural deposit
007	Friable dark brown silt, 0.25m thick	Topsoil
008	Firm mid yellowish brown silt, 0.5m thick	Subsoil
009	Firm mid yellowish brown limestone and sand, >100mm thick	Natural deposit

Appendix 3

GLOSSARY

Bronze Age	A period characterised by the introduction of bronze into the country for tools, between 2250 and 800 BC.
Context	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).
Layer	A layer is a term to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
Medieval	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
Natural	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity.
Neolithic	The 'New Stone Age' period, part of the prehistoric era, dating from approximately 4500-2250 BC.
Prehistoric	The period of human history prior to the introduction of writing. In Britain the prehistoric period lasts from the first evidence of human occupation about 500,000 BC, until the Roman invasion in the middle of the 1 st century AD.
Romano-British	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.
Saxon	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:

9	Context records
1	Photographic record sheet
1	Drawing sheets
1	Stratigraphic matrix
1	Bag of finds

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: 2000.105

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: RTN 00

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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