ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
ON LAND TO THE REAR OF
83-85 MAREHAM LANE,
SLEAFORD,
LINCOLNSHIRE.
(SML02)



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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF ON LAND TO THE REAR OF 83-85 MAREHAM LANE, SLEAFORD, LINCOLNSHIRE. (SML02)

Work Undertaken For Smith Construction (Heckington) Limited

March 2002

Report Compiled by Steve Thomson BSc (Hons) PIFA

National Grid Reference: TF 0735 4505 Planning Reference: N/57/0883/00 City and County Museum Accession No. 2002.75

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT SERVICES



APS Report No. 39/02

Conservation Services

1 9 APR 2002

Highways & Planning Directorate

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Mareham Lane, Sleaford. SML02

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CONTENTS

List of Figures List of Plates

1.	Summary 1					
2.	ntroduction					
3.	Project Aims					
4.	Methods3					
5.	Results 4 5.1 Phase 1: Natural Deposits 4 5.2 Phase 2: Undated Deposits 4 5.3 Phase 5: Modern Deposits 6					
6.	Discussion					
7.	Conclusions					
8.	Acknowledgements					
9.	Bibliography					
10.	Abbreviations 11					
Apper	ices					
1 2 3 4	Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief Context summary Glossary The Archive					

List of Figures

Figure 1 General location plan

Figure 2 Location plan and archaeological setting

Figure 3 Detailed site location plan

Figure 4 Plan of footings of Plot B showing section locations

Figure 5 Section drawings

List of Plates

Plate 1 General view of site at commencement of groundworks, looking north

Plate 2 Section 1, looking north

1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on land to the rear of 83-85 Mareham Lane, Sleaford, Lincolnshire, as the site is archaeologically sensitive. Prehistoric and Romano-British archaeology has been identified in the vicinity of the development area and the line of Mareham Lane Roman road lies to the east of the site. A large Anglo-Saxon cemetery has been partially excavated to the northeast of the development area.

An undated but probably post-medieval or later ditch was the only feature encountered. No evidence of Prehistoric, Romano-British or medieval activity was present in the excavated area with no artefacts recovered.

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. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits maybe disturbed or destroyed.' (IFA 1999).

2.2 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services (APS) was commissioned by Smith Construction to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the construction of two bungalows on land to the rear of 83-85 Mareham Lane, Sleaford, Lincolnshire. Approval for the development was sought through the submission of planning application N/57/0883/00 to North Kesteven District Council. The watching brief was carried

out on the 12th February 2002, in accordance with a specification designed by APS (Appendix 1) and approved by the North Kesteven Community Archaeologist.

2.3 Topography and Geology

Sleaford is located in the North Kesteven District of Lincolnshire, approximately 27km south of Lincoln city (Fig. 1). The site is located on the northeast side of Mareham Lane, to the rear of numbers 83-85 at national grid reference TF 0735 4505 (Fig. 20. Currently the site is partly under grass and partly under hardcore.

The site lies to the southeast of the town centre at approximately 12m OD. Local soils are the Curdridge Association, typically deep, permeable, coarse loamy soils (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 154).

Recent archaeological investigations in the area have identified natural deposits comprising coarse sand, clay and light coloured silt natural deposits (Snee 2000a, Snee 2000b) and silty sand and gravels (Albone 2001).

2.4 Archaeological Setting

The modern town of Sleaford has expanded to cover several previous foci of settlement and other activity dating from the prehistoric to the medieval periods (Fig. 2).

A scatter of prehistoric worked flints and two Bronze Age axe heads have been reported to the north of the development area. To the northeast, substantial evidence of an Iron Age settlement including a palisaded enclosure has been recorded. Excavations at Old Place in Sleaford have also produced evidence of a major Late Iron Age centre. Among the finds were coin pellet mould fragments and high status pottery, and it is believed that with the presence of a mint the site had important political functions (Elsdon 1997).

The Iron Age occupation at Old Sleaford was succeeded by an extensive Romano-British settlement. Additional evidence of Romano-British habitation has recovered from the Boston Road area and it is probable that Sleaford was a small Roman town that straddled Mareham Lane. The line of this Roman road is situated approximately 600m east of the present development site. Although the modern road adjacent to the present evaluation site goes by the same name, it diverges from the Roman road 1km to the southeast of the site

Approximately 500m northeast of the site is a large Anglo-Saxon cemetery which was partially excavated by George Thomas in 1881 (Thomas 1882). A total of 242 inhumations containing a variety of grave goods was recorded, although he estimated that the cemetery probably contained around 600 burials in total. Subsequent analysis of the grave goods indicates that the burials date principally to the 6th century AD. Thomas' excavation appears to have been carried out in the northwest corner of what is now the car park of the Carre Arms Hotel.

In 1916 a further burial with Anglo-Saxon grave goods was found during widening of Mareham Lane in Sleaford. The exact location was not recorded so it is unclear whether this burial was isolated or an outlier from the main cemetery (White 1988, 87).

Medieval remains from Sleaford include the former church of St Giles which was founded during the late Saxon period and became redundant during the early post-medieval period. There is also evidence of a medieval manorial complex at Old Place. Ridge and furrow has been recorded around the periphery of Sleaford and is indicative of medieval agriculture. Earthwork remains of this type are present at the cricket pitch northwest of the site.

Sleaford castle survives as an earthwork and is located c. 1km from the development area. Recent archaeological investigations in the vicinity did not encounter any archaeological deposits (Snee 2000, 2000b) whilst evaluation trenches south of Mareham Lane revealed evidence of possible ridge and furrow, a 13th – 14th century gully and undated features (Albone 2001).

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

Foundation trenches for a bungalow were excavated using a mechanical excavator fitted with a 0.60m wide, toothed bucket, to a maximum depth of 0.54m.

Construction on Plot A (Fig. 3) had commenced before archaeological monitoring could take place.

The exposed sections of the trenches for Plot B were inspected and hand cleaned at close intervals to identify archaeological remains. Spoil heaps were monitored and searched by trowel to recover artefactual material which may have assisted with the interpretation of the site. 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. A photographic record was compiled depicting the setting of the site and the recorded section drawings. Sections were

drawn at scales of 1:10 and 1:20 and an annotated sketch plan of the footings was produced.

Recording of the deposits encountered during the watching brief was undertaken according to standard APS' 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 summary of all contexts, with interpretations, appears as Appendix 2.

Contexts are described below with the numbers assigned in the field shown in bold and brackets.

5. RESULTS

Following post-excavation analysis, three phases were identified;

- 5.1 Phase 1 Natural deposits
- 5.2 Phase 2 Undated deposits
- 5.3 Phase 3 Modern deposits

5.1 Natural deposits

The earliest deposit encountered during the course of the investigation was a moderately compact, mid-orangey yellow gravelly sand (004).

5.2 Undated deposits

Cut into the natural (004) was a linear feature, oriented north-south and 2.6m wide (006) (Fig.5 – section 2). The cut was interpreted as a ditch and was filled with a moderately compact, mid-brownish grey silty sand (005) containing brick fragments.

5.3 Modern deposits

Sealing both Phase 1 and 2 deposits was a moderately compact, mid-yellowish brown and greyish brown silty sand subsoil (003). This was overlain by a rubble hardstand (002) to the northwest (Fig. 5 – section 2) and a soft, mid-dark blackish grey silty sand topsoil (001) elsewhere on the site.

6. DISCUSSION

Phase 1 natural deposits were represented by a gravely sand, which is in keeping with soils identified during recent watching briefs in the Mareham Lane area (Albone 2001).

An undated, north-south oriented ditch formed Phase 2. The ditch is likely to represent a land division or field boundary. The fill within the ditch was noted to contain brick fragments and it is unlikely that it is of any great antiquity.

Modern, Phase 3 deposits comprised a subsoil, hard standing and topsoil.

7. CONCLUSION

Archaeological investigations were undertaken on land to the rear of 83-85 Mareham Lane, Sleaford, Lincolnshire, as the site is archaeologically sensitive.

An undated but probably post-medieval or later ditch was the only archaeological feature encountered. No evidence of Romano-British activity or the extent of the Anglo-Saxon cemetery was identified with no artefacts recovered.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services would like to acknowledge the assistance of Mrs R Jackman of Smith Construction who commissioned the fieldwork and this report. The project was coordinated by Dale Trimble who edited this report with Tom Lane. The North Kesteven Heritage Officer, Joanna Hambly, kindly allowed access to the relevant parish files.

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10. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services
IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists
MOLAS Museum of London
Archaeology Service
SMR Sites and Monuments Record
Office



Figure 1: General Location Plan

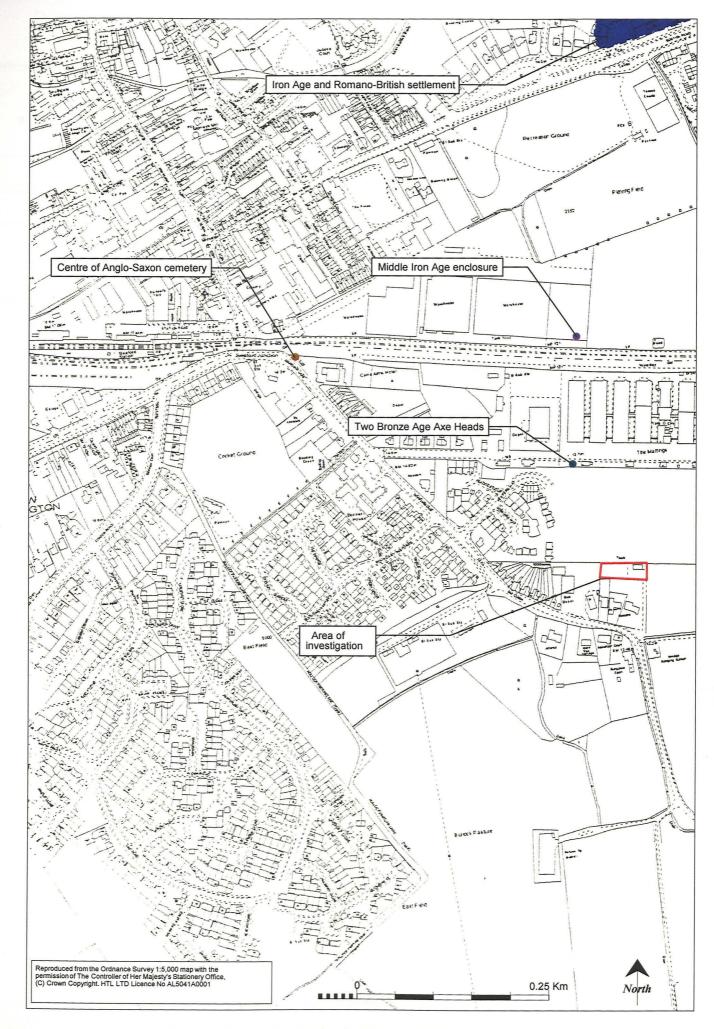


Figure 2: Site location plan showing archaeological setting

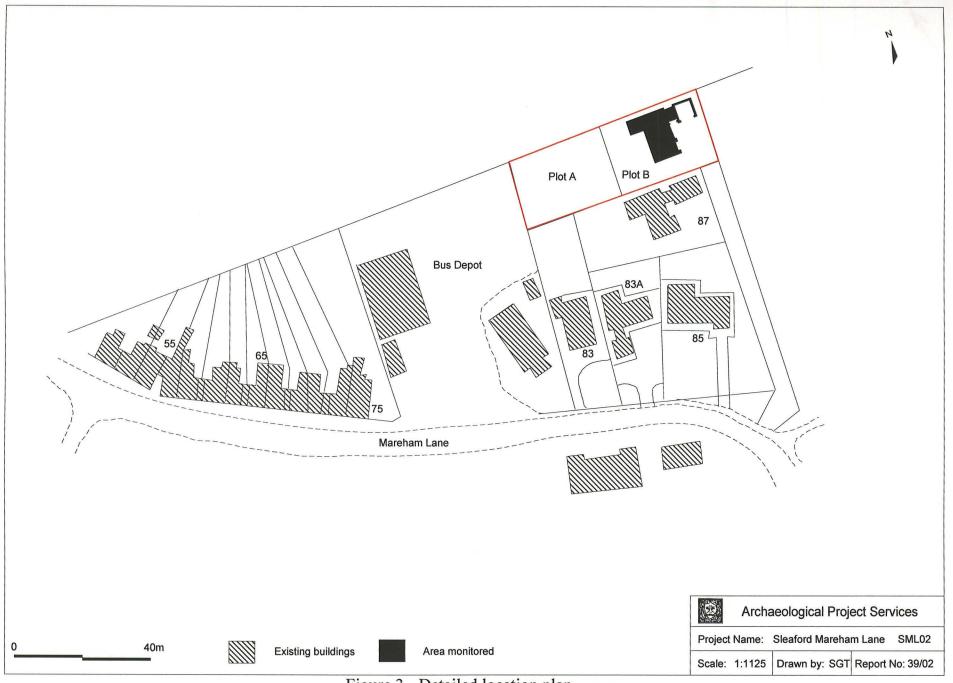


Figure 3 - Detailed location plan

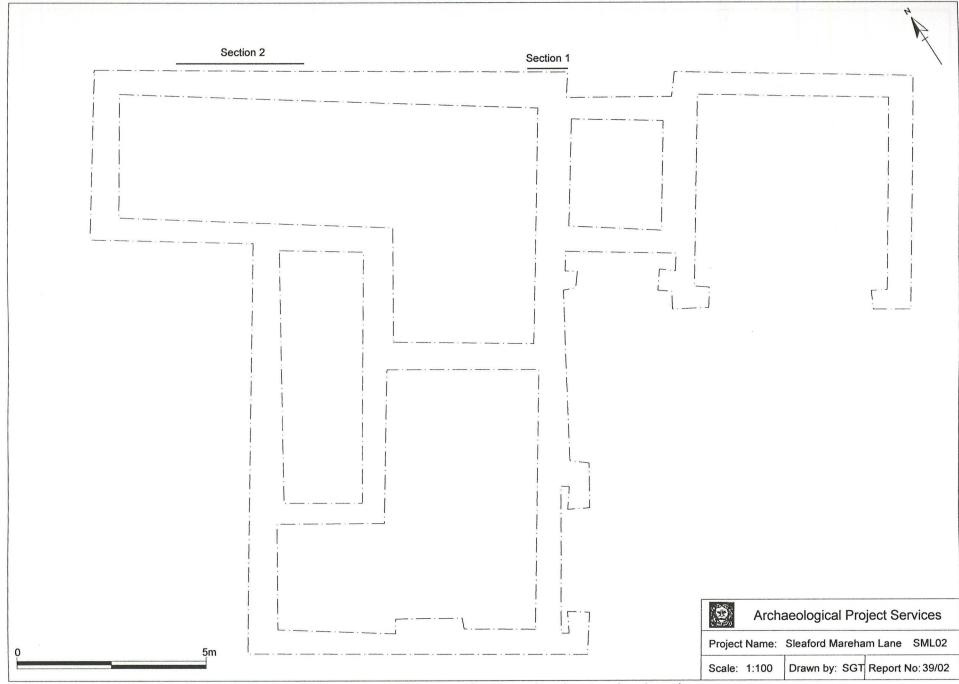


Figure 4 - Plan of footings of Plot B showing section locations

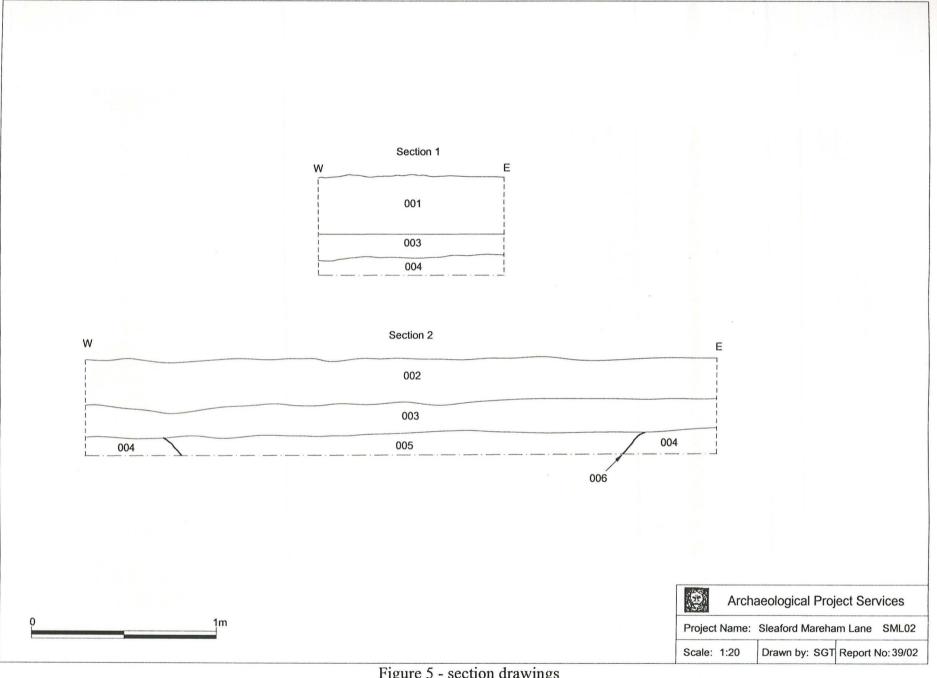


Figure 5 - section drawings



Plate 1 General view of site at commencement of groundworks, looking north



Plate 2 Section 1, looking north

LAND TO REAR OF 83 - 85 MAREHAM LANE SLEAFORD LINCOLNSHIRE

SPECIFICATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

PREPARED FOR SMITH CONSTRUCTION

BY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT SERVICES
Institute of Field Archaeologists'
Registered Organisation No. 21

JANUARY 2002

SUMMARY

- 1.1 A watching brief is required during development at 83-85 Mareham Lane, Sleaford, Lincolnshire.
- 1.2 Prehistoric and Roman archaeology has been identified in the vicinity of the development area and the line of Mareham Lane Roman road lies to the east of the site.
- 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 to the rear of 83-85 Mareham Lane, Sleaford, Lincolnshire. The site is located at national grid reference TF 0735 4505.
- 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 Sleaford lies approximately 27km south of Lincoln in the administrative district of North Kesteven. The site is located on the northeast side of Mareham Lane, to the rear of numbers 83-85 at national grid reference TF 0735 4505. Currently the site is partly under grass and partly under hardcore.

4 PLANNING BACKGROUND

4.1 A full planning application (N/57/0883/00) was submitted to North Kesteven District Council for the erection of two bungalows. The application is subject to a standard condition requiring the implementation of an archaeological watching brief during the development.

5 SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY

5.1 The site lies to the southeast of the town centre at approximately 12m OD. Local soils are the Curdridge Association, typically deep, permeable, coarse loamy soils (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 154).

6 ARCHAEOLOGY

6.1 There are no known archaeological finds from the development area however, prehistoric and Roman finds and deposits have been recorded in the vicinity. Worked flints have been recovered approximately 150m to the north of the site and Bronze Age axes have been found to the north

of the development area.

- 6.2 The line of Mareham Lane Roman road runs north south approximately 600m to the east of the site. A brooch, coins and pottery dating from the Romano-British period have been recovered from various sites to the north of the development area.
- 6.3 A watching brief on land adjacent to Mareham Lane revealed a series of features such as ditches, gullies and pits and recovered fragments of Romano-British pottery (Archaeological Project Services 1997).

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 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 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 <u>Stage 2</u>

- 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

Officer of North Kesteven District Council. They will be given seven days notice in writing before the commencement of the project.

14 VARIATIONS AND CONTINGENCIES

- 14.1 Variations to the proposed scheme of works will only be made following written confirmation of acceptance from the archaeological curator.
- 14.2 In the event of the discovery of any unexpected remains of archaeological importance, or of any

- changed circumstances, it is the responsibility of the archaeological contractor to inform the archaeological curator (*Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook* 1998, Sections 5.7 and 18).
- 14.3 Where important archaeological remains are discovered and deemed to merit further investigation additional resources may be required to provide an appropriate level of investigation, recording and analysis.
- 14.4 Any contingency requirement for additional fieldwork or post-excavation analysis outside the scope of the proposed scheme of works will only be activated following full consultation with the archaeological curator and the client.

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 personday) 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.

Task Body to be undertaking the work

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

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.
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- 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

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Specification: Version 1, 18/01/2002

Appendix 2

Context Summary

Context No.	Section	Description	Interpretation
001	1	Soft, mid-dark blackish grey, silty sand, 0.33m thick, containing frequent brick and tile fragments, occasional pebbles and ash.	Topsoil
002	2	Moderately compact, mid-grey, white and red ashy sand containing occasional concrete, frequent brick.	Made ground
003	1,2	Moderately compact, mid-yellowish brown and greyish brown silty sand, 0.20m thick containing moderate pebbles	Subsoil
004	1,2	Moderately compact, mid-orangey yellow gravely sand	Natural geological deposit
005	2	Moderately compact, mid-brownish grey, silty sand containing occasional brick fragments	Fill of 006
006	2	Linear cut, 2.6m E-W, >0.10m deep, Graually sloping sides, N-S orientation	Probable ditch

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, *e.g.* (004).

Cut

A cut refers to the physical action of digging a posthole, pit, ditch, foundation trench, *etc*. Once the fills of these features are removed during an archaeological investigation the original cut is therefore exposed and subsequently recorded.

Fill

Once a feature has been dug it begins to silt up (either slowly or rapidly) or it can be back-filled manually. The soil(s) which become contained by the cut are referred to as its fill(s).

Iron Age

A period characterised by the introduction of Iron into the country for tools, between 800 BC and AD 50.

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.

Post-medieval

The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.

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.

Appendix 4

The Archive

The archive consists of:

- 6 Context records
- 2 Drawing sheets
- 1 Daily record sheet
- 1 Context record sheet
- 1 Section record sheet
- 1 Plan record sheet
- 1 Photographic record sheet
- 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 1HO

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: 2002.75

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: SML02

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.