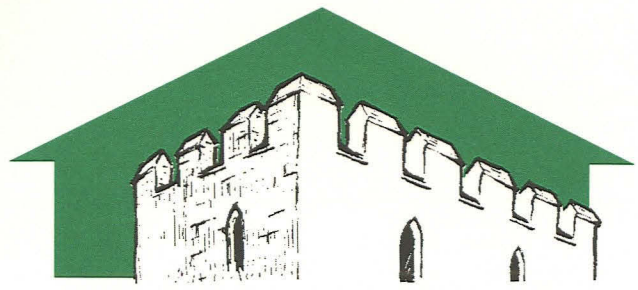


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PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

L I N C O L N

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF REPORT;
WYNDHAM PARK NURSERY SCHOOL,
GRANTHAM, LINCOLNSHIRE**

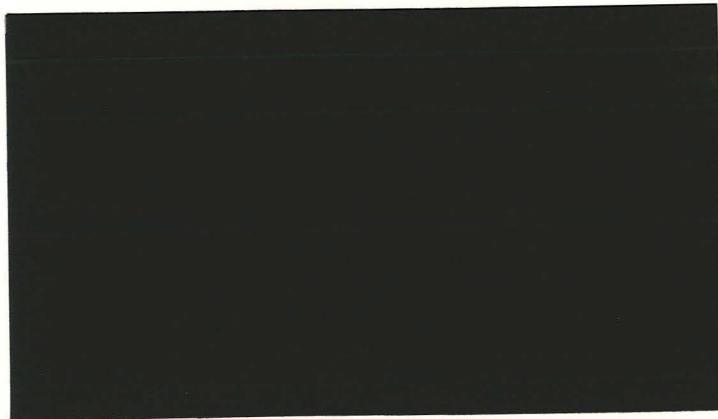
NGR: SK 91767 36474
SITE CODE: WPNG02
LCNCC ACC. NO: 2002.128



Conservation
Services

26 APR 2002

Highways & Planning
Directorate



Event K12945

Source 417651
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF REPORT;
WYNDHAM PARK NURSERY SCHOOL,
GRANTHAM, LINCOLNSHIRE**

NGR: SK 91767 36474
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Report prepared for
Hyder Business Services
by Chris Clay
March 2002

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Summary

- An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the groundworks for an extension at Wyndham Park Nursery School, Grantham, Lincolnshire.
- Grantham has evidence of settlement activity from the prehistoric and Romano-British periods, and was a major centre throughout the Saxon and medieval periods. The current development lies close to the core of the medieval settlement.
- The watching brief resulted in the exposure of no archaeologically significant deposits or artefacts.



Fig.1: General site location (scale 1:25,000)
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1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) was commissioned by Hyder Business Services to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks for an extension to the Wyndham Park Nursery School, Grantham, Lincolnshire.

This report details the results of the fieldwork. It is written to conform to national and local guidelines as set out in the Lincolnshire County Council document *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: A Manual of Archaeological Practice* (LCC, 1998).

2.0 Site location and description

Grantham is in the administrative district of South Kesteven, approximately 35km south of Lincoln and 18km south-west of Sleaford. The proposed development site is an area of low grass, on the north side of existing school buildings, and to the south of Hill Avenue. The site slopes gently from north to south and centres on NGR SK 91767 36474.

The local geology consists of drift deposits of river sand and gravel, overlying Lower Lias Clay (BGS, 1972).

3.0 Planning background

Planning permission was granted to construct an extension to an existing complex of school buildings; located in the south-west corner of the school grounds, and comprising a community room and headmaster's office.

The planning permission was granted subject to the undertaking of an archaeological watching brief on all associated groundworks.

4.0 Archaeological and historical background

The earliest archaeological evidence from the area dates to the Middle Palaeolithic; represented by a single flint hand axe. More substantial evidence comes from the Mesolithic period (8000-4000BC). A cluster of six sites has been identified by fieldwalking at Barrowby, approximately 2km east of Grantham (May, 1976).

Small amounts of Neolithic material have been recovered from the area. At Little Gonerby, on the northern outskirts of Grantham, 2 Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age ceramic vessels and a stone axe were discovered in 1875. These vessels were associated with one human cremation burial (contained within the larger of the two vessels) and two inhumations, and may represent successive phases of burial in a ploughed out barrow (*ibid.*).

Numerous flint and pottery scatters attest further prehistoric activity from the Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age periods. The distribution of these findspots runs

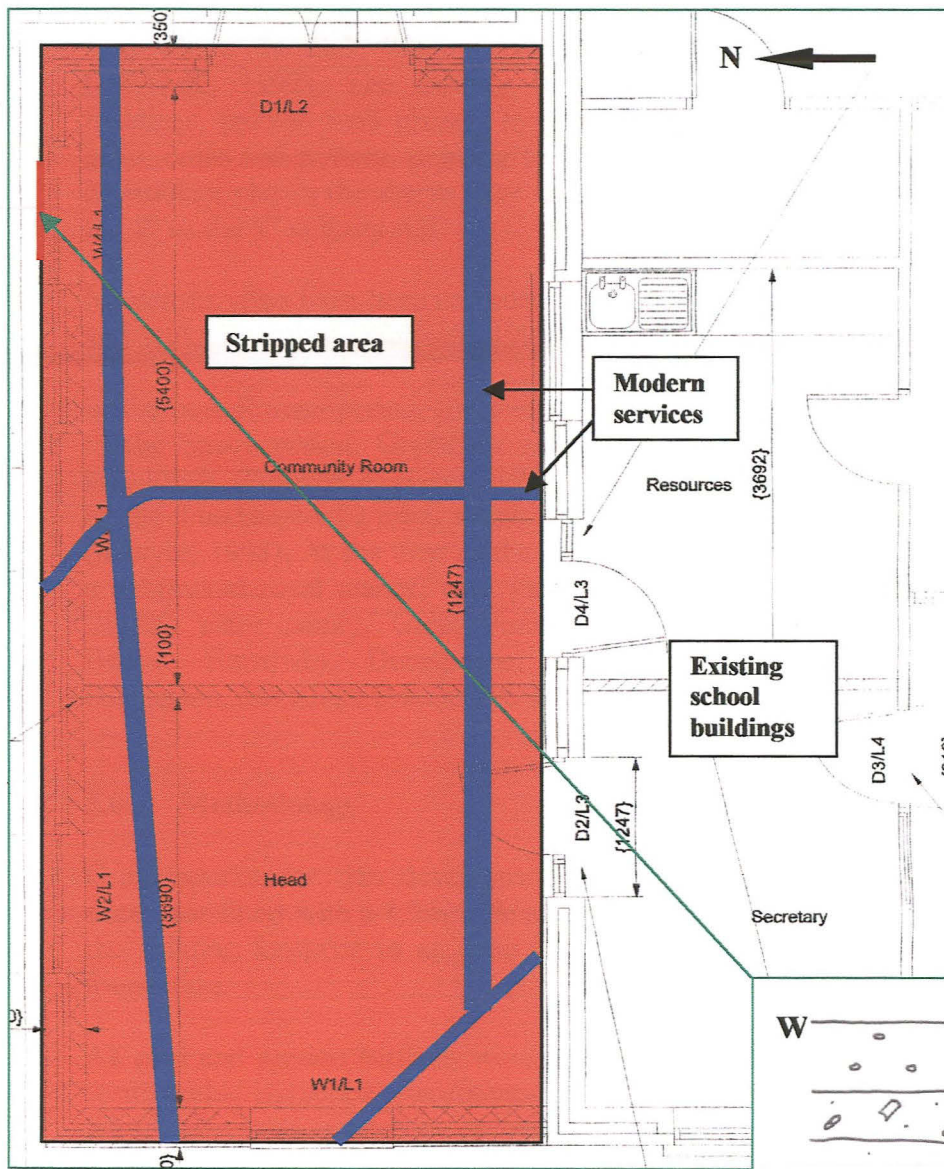
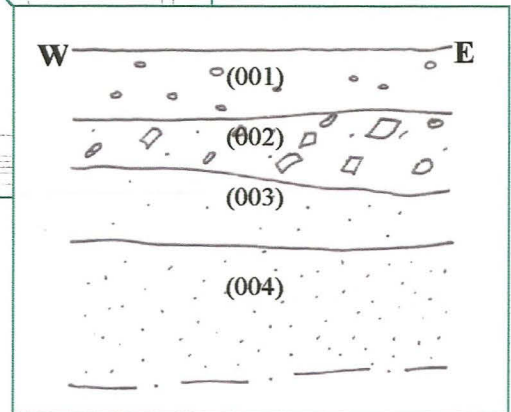


Fig.2: Development plan of new extension, showing the area stripped in relation to existing school buildings (scale 1:75)

Fig.3: Sample section, south facing section (scale 1:20)



along the Witham Valley and the higher ground overlooking the river. Iron Age ceramic evidence has also been found at Barrowby (May, 1976).

Grantham itself has yielded little in the way of Romano-British material, although some pottery was discovered from the grounds of Grantham House, 350m south-west of the current site (SMR data). The main focus of settlement at this time appears to have been at Saltersford, on the southern periphery of Grantham. The site controlled a ford where the Salt Way, a prehistoric and Roman road, crossed the Witham (Whitwell, 1992). The County Sites and Monuments Record references stone buildings, painted wall plaster, hypocaust flue tiles, iron and bronze tools, window glass, coins and pottery, pointing to a moderately affluent community. The large coin assemblage shows the site to have been occupied throughout the Roman period, from the 1st to the 5th century AD.

Numerous villas have been recorded in the Grantham area, e.g. Great Ponton, Denton, and Stoke Rochford (Whitwell, 1992).

In the post-Roman period, the focus of settlement shifted northwards, and by the end of the Saxon period, Grantham was an established community of over a thousand individuals (Pevsner & Harris, 1989). The town's relative importance was indicated by the foundation of a mint, which was in operation by the end of the 10th century AD (Sawyer, 1998). At the time of the Domesday Survey, the town acted as the centre of a substantial royal manor, with jurisdictions in Gonerby, Harlaxton, *Nongtone* (Old English place name), Great Ponton, Old Somerby, Sapperton, Braceby, Welby, Belton, Harrowby, Dunsthorpe, Londonthorpe, Barkston, Denton, Skillington, Hungerton, and Stoke (Morgan & Thorn, 1986).

5.0 Methodology

Groundworks for this development were carried out using a 360° tracked mini excavator fitted with a 1.2m wide smooth trenching bucket. This involved stripping of the building footprint to an even depth, prior to the construction of a concrete raft foundation.

All plan and section surfaces were examined and intermittently cleaned to clarify the stratigraphic sequence. Representative sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20, and information was recorded on standard watching brief record sheets. A colour photographic record was also maintained, selected frames from which have been included in this report. The fieldwork was carried out by Simon Savage on February 19th 2002.

6.0 Results

Stripping for the building footprint involved removing 0.5m of deposits on the south side of the site, increasing to 0.9m on the north side. The uppermost deposit was a topsoil of dark grey sandy loam, with abundant gravel, and approximately 0.2m thick, (001). This sealed a layer of modern building debris, (002), approximately 0.2m deep. Beneath this was a buried, former subsoil, deposit (003), also 0.2m deep, over a natural deposit of orange/brown silty sand, (004). Cut through the natural, was a complex of modern services, as indicated on fig.2.

Excluding the modern service trenches, no cut archaeological features were exposed anywhere within the building footprint; and, excluding modern material, no artefactual remains were recovered.

7.0 Discussion and conclusion

No significant archaeological deposits or artefacts were exposed during this watching brief. Furthermore, it was apparent that the area of the building footprint had been disturbed by numerous modern services. It is concluded therefore that the development has not compromised any archaeological resource in this area.

8.0 Effectiveness of methodology

The methodology chosen was appropriate to the development, in that it allowed a rapid assessment of the archaeological potential of the site. A more detailed level of investigation was not required, as evidenced by the lack of archaeological remains.

9.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank Hyder Business Services for this commission. Thanks go also to the sub-contractors, Gelder Construction Ltd., for their cooperation during the watching brief.

10.0 References

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11.0 Site archive

The primary records for this investigation are currently in the possession of Pre-Construct Archaeology. They will be deposited at Lincoln City and County Museum within six months. Access to the archive may be gained by quoting the global accession number 2002.128.

APPENDIX 1: Colour Plates



PL 1: General view of the site, looking north-east



PL 2: Representative shot of stratigraphic sequence, looking north

APPENDIX 2: List of archaeological contexts

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Description</i>
001	Layer	Topsoil
002	Layer	Modern building debris
003	Layer	Buried former subsoil
004	Layer	Natural