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Directorate

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF:  
LAND ADJACENT TO THE  
FORMER GREEN TREE PUBLIC HOUSE  
BARDNEY ROAD, BRANSTON BOOTHS,  
LINCOLNSHIRE.**

*Branston & Mene Parish*

NGR: 506170 369050  
Site Code: GTBB 02  
LCCM Acc. No. 2002.225  
Planning Ref: N/13/1211/01

Report Prepared for  
Mr and Mrs Marshall.  
by Mark Allen BSc AIFA

June 2002

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### Summary

- *An archaeological watching brief took place on land adjacent to the former Green Tree Public House, Bardney Road, Branston Booths, Lincolnshire, during groundworks associated with the construction of a single dwelling.*
- *The Car Dyke is located on the opposite side of Bardney Road to the site. This Scheduled Ancient Monument was engineered in the Roman period; probably functioning as both a canal and catchment drain that directed water from higher ground, and preventing flooding of the fenland basin.*
- *A single substantial modern dump deposit was exposed, and the formation of this deposit suggests that truncation of the topsoil and some natural sand may have removed archaeological deposits, had these once been present.*

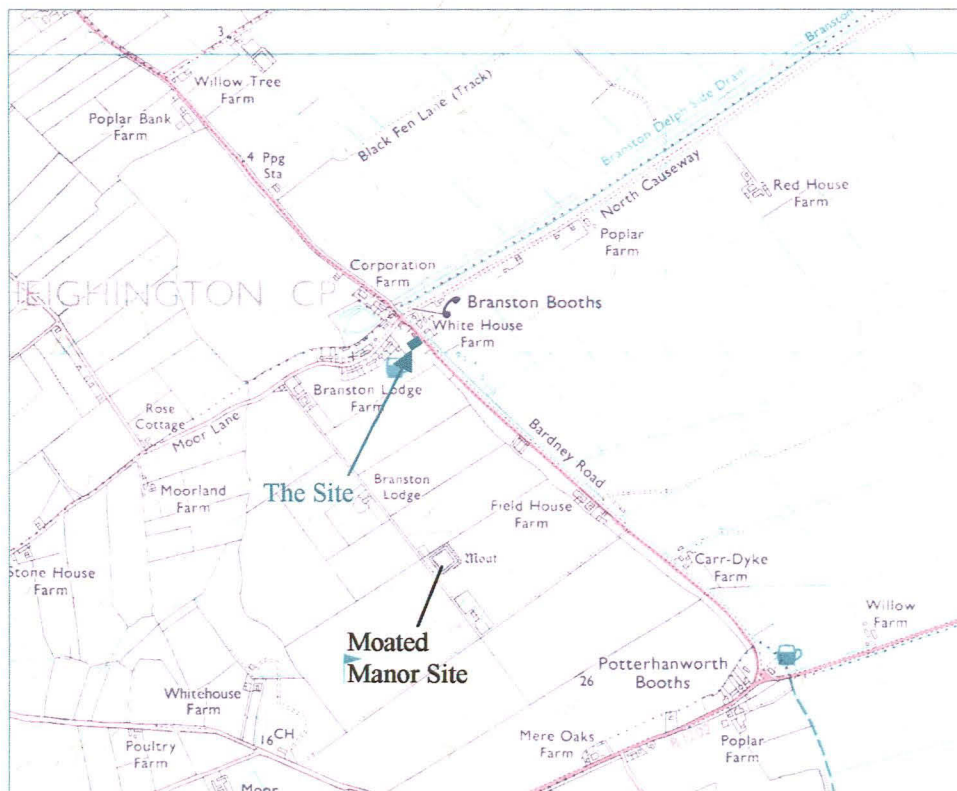


Figure 1: Area of investigation at 1: 25,000  
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## **1.0 Introduction**

An archaeological watching brief was carried out for Mr and Mrs J Marshall on land adjacent to the former Green Tree Public House, Bardney Road, Branston Booths, Lincolnshire (fig. 1). The work was commissioned to fulfil a planning requirement associated with the construction of a single house (fig. 2).

The programme of works was conducted in accordance with procedures that are set out in the Lincolnshire County Council publication *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: A Manual of Archaeological Practice* (LCC, 1998): national guidelines produced by the Institute of Field Archaeologists were also observed (IFA, 1994), and a specification of works was submitted to meet the requirements of a formal project brief, issued by the Heritage Officer of North Kesteven.

The archive for this report will be held at the Lincoln City and County Museum.

## **2.0 Location and description**

Branston Booths lies at the edge of the floodplain of the River Witham, approximately 7.5km east-south-east of Lincoln centre, and 4km south-west of Branston. The development site is situated at the south-east end of the village, less than 250m north-east of the parish church.

Prior to development the land comprised a grassed area to the south and south-east and a tarmac surface in the north-east quadrant. The ground surface lies at approximately 5m OD, and is predominantly level.

The development lies on the eastern fringe of an area of boulder clay, adjacent to younger alluvium or estuarine silt and clay, with peat deposits occurring within the Witham basin. This mantles Upper Jurassic (B.G.S., 1973).

Central National Grid Reference: 506170 369050.

## **3.0 Planning background**

North Kesteven District Council granted full planning consent, subject to the undertaking of an archaeological watching brief on all works involving ground disturbance (Ref. N/13/1211/01). A dwelling was to be constructed to the south-west of the Car Dyke (which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument) and south-east of the former Green Tree Public House. This consent replaced a previous application for redevelopment of the public house and the construction of three dwellings.

The watching brief was required due to the possibility that the development would expose remains associated with the Car Dyke.

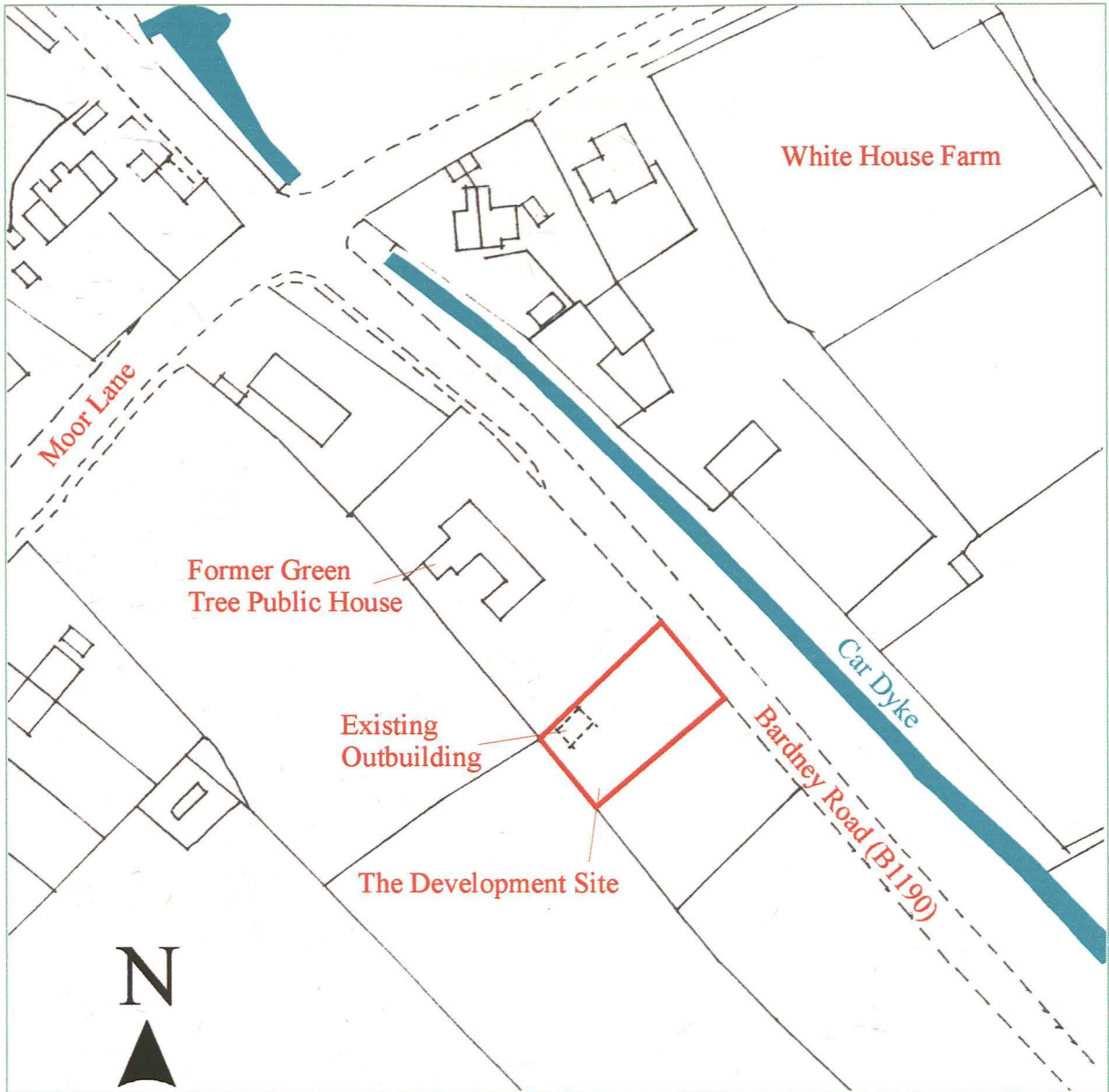


Figure 2: Location of development site in relation to Car Dyke. At scale 1:1250

#### 4.0 Archaeological and historical background

The County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) incorporates information which demonstrates that the area surrounding Branston Booths was occupied at various times during the prehistoric period. Reported finds include a quantity of worked flint of Late Mesolithic date; recovered from a pit at the edge of the Witham floodplain (600m to the north-west). This assemblage suggests low-level, possibly transient, activity in the vicinity (Simmons and Cope-Faulkner 1997). Two flint arrowheads (one barbed and tanged) and an unpolished Neolithic stone axe indicate activity in the Neolithic and Bronze Age.

Two prehistoric dugout boats are known from the area (Palmer-Brown 1995). These were almost certainly discovered during drainage works in the Witham fen, although their exact findspot remains unknown.

The Car Dyke is approximately 10m from the site, on the opposite side of Bardney Road (B1190). The dyke was constructed in the Roman period, possibly to fulfil a dual role as both a navigable canal and a catchment drain for water from higher ground, preventing flooding of the Witham floodplain and fen basin. The Car Dyke was built along the eastern edge of the Limestone escarpment, following the 5m contour for a large part of its course (Whitwell 1992).

Other finds from around Branston Booths of Romano-British date include a tile kiln c.700m to the south-west, and pottery and a stone wall slightly further to the south-west (approximately 900m away).

Branston Booths is within the parish of Branston (approximately 4km to the south-west). The place-name Branston is a hybrid of Old Norse and Old English elements meaning Brand's farmstead or village (Cameron 1998). This suggests an Anglo-Saxon settlement was taken over and partially renamed by the Danes. 'Booth' was derived from an Old Danish word, *bōth*, meaning temporary shed, which was introduced to the region during the 9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> centuries (*ibid*). It is thought to refer to transitory camps or seasonally occupied sites, and often has a close spatial relationship to riverside locations. It is therefore likely that it was used in particular in reference to fisheries (Lane & Hayes, 1993). The settlement name Branston Booths therefore appears to imply that there was a medieval fishery somewhere along this section of the Witham floodplain.

A medieval moated manor site was part-excavated in the 1960's, less than 800m to the south of the development area. This is shown on the modern OS map as a moat (see fig. 1 above).

#### 5.0 Methodology

One experienced field archaeologist was present to monitor the groundworks on the 16<sup>th</sup> May 2002. Foundation trenches were excavated in spits not exceeding 0.2m in depth, by a JCB using a back-actor fitted with a 0.6m wide toothed bucket. The removal of these deposits was monitored constantly to ensure that any archaeological features exposed by this process were identified.

The archaeological fieldwork entailed the cleaning by hand of all exposed soil surfaces, followed by a detailed inspection. All archaeological deposits identified by this process were subjected to limited excavation to assess nature, dimensions and date. These investigations resulted in the production of written descriptions on standard watching brief context record sheets. Colour photographs and scale drawings (in both plan and section) compliment these accounts, and will form the basis of a long-term project archive.

## **6.0 Results** (see figs. 2 – 5; plates 1 and 2)

Prior to monitoring, a section of tarmac had been removed from the north-west end of the site and vegetation had been stripped from the remaining area.

The foundation trenches for the dwelling were excavated to a depth of approximately 1.0m.

The east end of the site contained a deep topsoil, (004), comprising grey/brown silt sand loam with some flint gravel inclusion.

In the north-west half of the development, the trenches exposed a deep grey silty sand containing gravel inclusion, modern brick and tile and limestone fragments (001) that had truncated the topsoil (004) (see figs. 2 and 4). This modern dump of material was approximately 0.75m deep, overlying two distinct natural deposits: a discrete area of light yellow/orange clay (003) to the west, overlying orange sand natural (002) that was common throughout the development area.

No further archaeological or natural deposits were exposed.



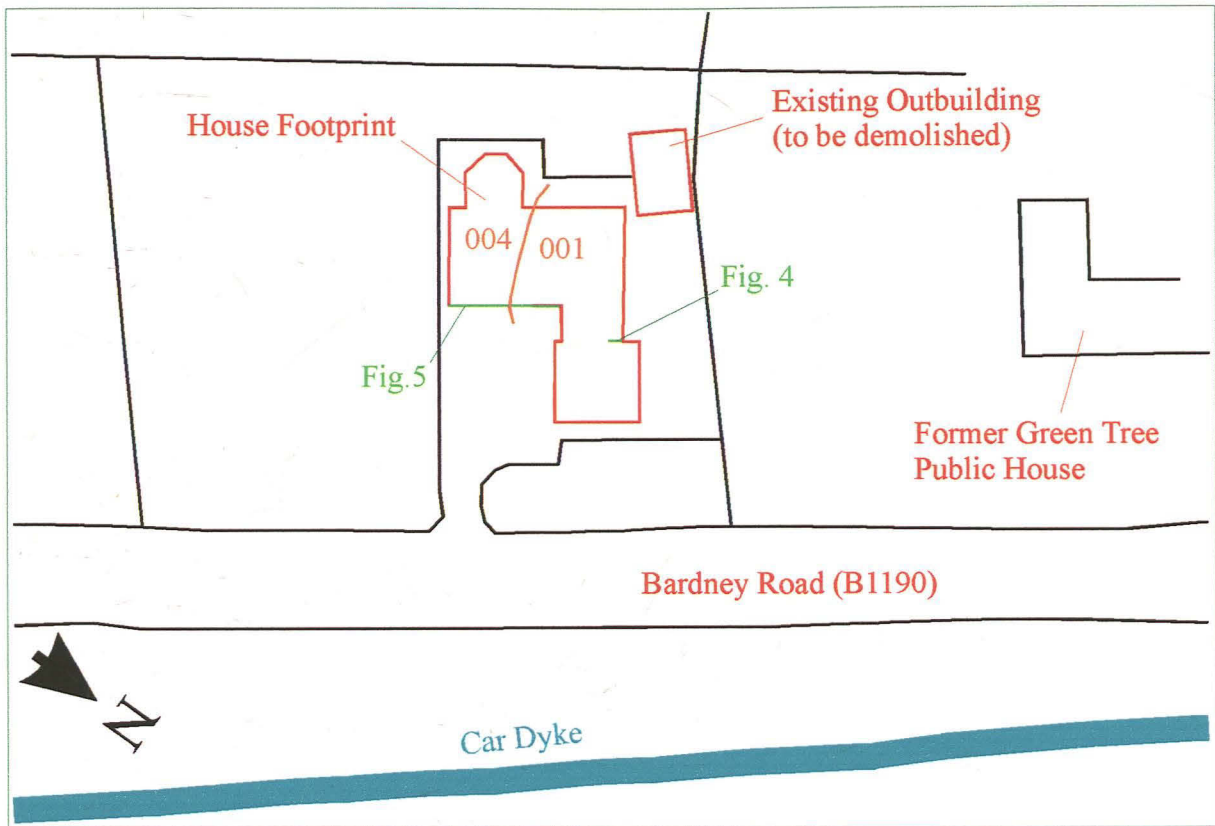


Figure 3: Detailed location plan of development showing location of figures and area of modern ground disturbance and subsequent dumping (001). At scale 1:500

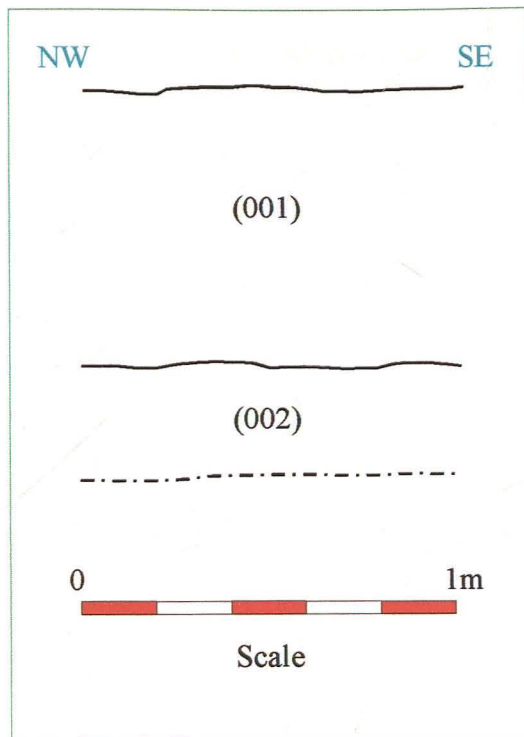


Figure 4: Sw facing Representative section at scale 1:20

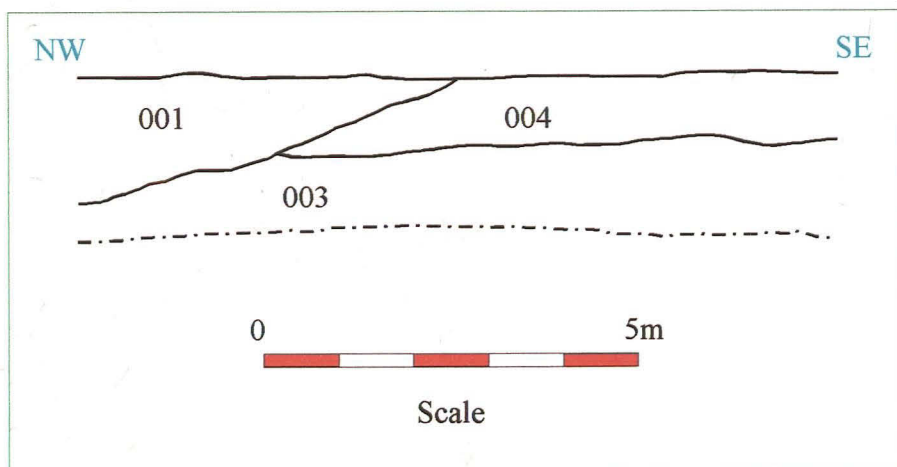


Figure 5: SW facing section showing modern truncation of topsoil (004). At scale 1:50

## 7.0 Discussion and conclusions

The watching brief was, to all intents and purposes, negative, with only a single deposit of low archaeological significance being exposed within foundation trench excavations. This deposit, (001), appeared to be a modern dump horizon, formed after truncation of the topsoil. Figure 5 (see above) demonstrates that removal of the topsoil had truncated natural sand by at least 0.3m, thus removing any potentially significant archaeological deposits.

## 8.0 Effectiveness of methodology

The sequence that was exposed suggest that few archaeological deposits were disturbed by this development. It is therefore concluded that the methodology was appropriate to the development.

## 9.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank Mr and Mrs J Marshall for this commission.

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### 11.0 Site archive

The site archive (documentary and physical) for this project is in preparation and will be deposited at the Lincoln City and County Museum (documentary) within six months. Access to the archive may be granted by quoting the global accession number 2002.225.

**APPENDIX 1: Colour Plates**



**Pl. 1: Site location shot showing foundation trenches under excavation, looking south-east.**



**Pl. 2: SW facing representative section (see figure 4), looking east.**



**Pl. 3: Section of Car Dyke across road from the development, looking south-east.**

**APPENDIX 2: List of Archaeological contexts**

<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
001	layer	modern dump deposit
002	layer	orange sand natural
003	layer	yellow/orange clay
004	layer	topsoil