

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

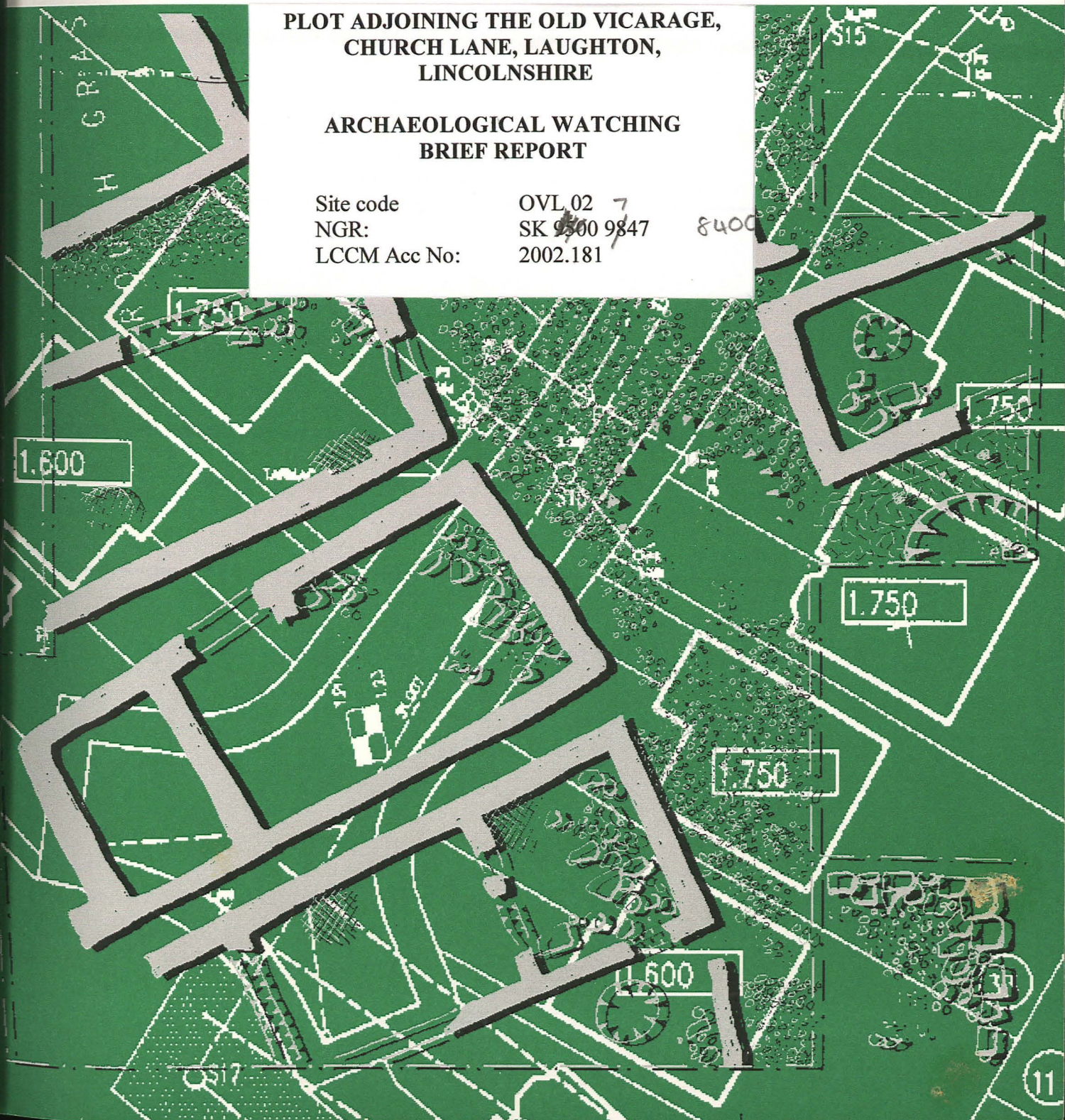
L I N C O L N

**PLOT ADJOINING THE OLD VICARAGE,
CHURCH LANE, LAUGHTON,
LINCOLNSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING
BRIEF REPORT**

Site code	OVL 02 7
NGR:	SK 9500 9847
LCCM Acc No:	2002.181

8400



Acc No 2002.181

Event L13212
Source - L17939
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Highways & Planning
Directorate

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Report prepared for Mr & Mrs J Crowther
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Summary

- *An archaeological watching brief took place during residential development on land adjacent to the Old Vicarage, Laughton, Lincolnshire.*
- *The watching brief identified potentially significant archaeological remains, including a stone foundation that is probably of medieval date. This foundation did not conform to existing settlement boundaries, and was probably built to support a timber framed structure, which could not be dated using standard archaeological methods.*

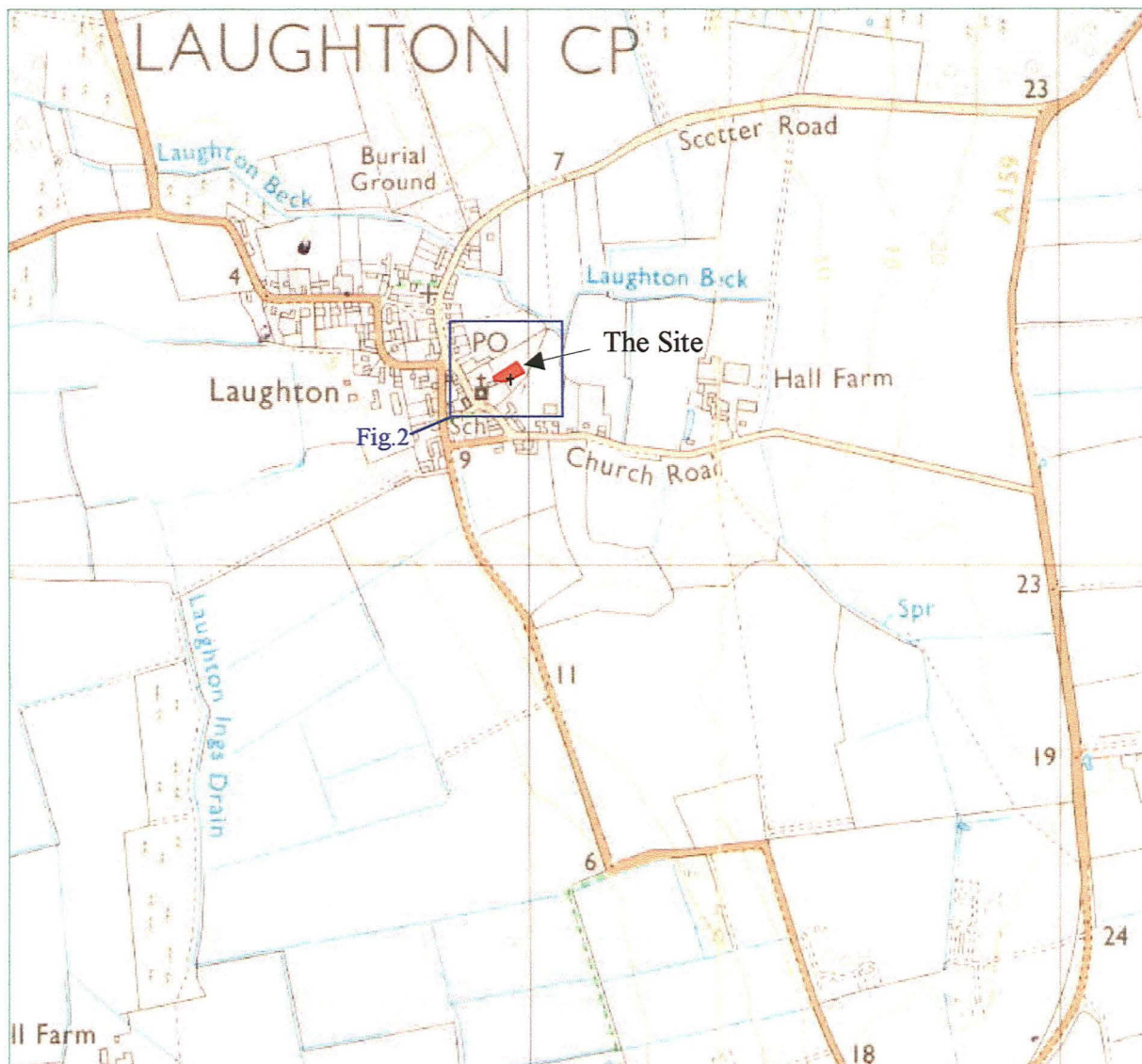


Fig. 1: Site Location. Scale 1:12500. The area shown in fig.2 is shown in blue and the development is shown in red.(OS copyright licence no. AL 515 21 A0001)

1.0 Introduction

An archaeological watching brief took place during the excavation of footing trenches for a single dwelling, with attached garage, on land adjoining the Old Vicarage, Laughton, Lincolnshire (National Grid Reference SK 9500 9847). The work was commissioned by Mr & Mrs J. Crowther, to fulfil a condition attached to planning permission (Ref. M01/P/0890). *0887 M00/P/0987*

This report documents the results of the archaeological observation and recording undertaken on 22.04.2002. The works were undertaken to fulfil the objectives of a formal recommendation issued by the Assistant Built Environment Officer of Lincolnshire County Council, and a project specification prepared by Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln). This approach complies with the recommendations of *Archaeology & Planning: Planning Policy Guidance Note 16*, (Department of the Environment, 1990), *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991), *Standards and guidance for archaeological watching briefs*, (IFA, 1994), and the Lincolnshire County Council document *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: a manual of archaeological practice* (LCC, 1998).

Copies of this report will be deposited with the commissioning client, the Assistant Built Environment Officer for Lincolnshire County Council / the County SMR. A short text will be submitted to the editor of the county journal, *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology*; and this will feature as a short note in due course. Reports will also be deposited at the City and County Museum, Lincoln, accompanied with an ordered project archive.

2.0 Location and Description (Figs 1 and 2)

Laughton is situated in the administrative district of West Lindsey approximately 7km north-east of Gainsborough and 3.5km east of the River Trent. The development site is located on the immediate east side of Church Road (National Grid Reference SK 8368 7882) towards the east of the village and approximately 40m north of All Saints church. It comprises an irregular unit of approximately 0.1 hectares.

The site lies at an altitude approximately 11.0m above mean sea level, and the underlying geology consists of wind-blown sand overlying base deposits of Mercia Mudstone (BGS 1999).

Prior to development, the site comprised part of the garden of 'The Old Vicarage' (fig. 3). The plot itself is defined by a 5ft brick wall on the north side, a 3ft brick wall on the east side, and a 7ft brick wall with ornamental gateway on the west side. It is presently open to the Old Vicarage and its garden to the south, which is itself bounded by the church to the south. The ground slopes from Church Road in the west, approximately 1.5m down to the eastern property boundary. A mature tree had been removed towards the SW corner of the house plot, and (excluding some shrubbery in the area of the entrance) ground cover generally comprised a well-kept lawn.

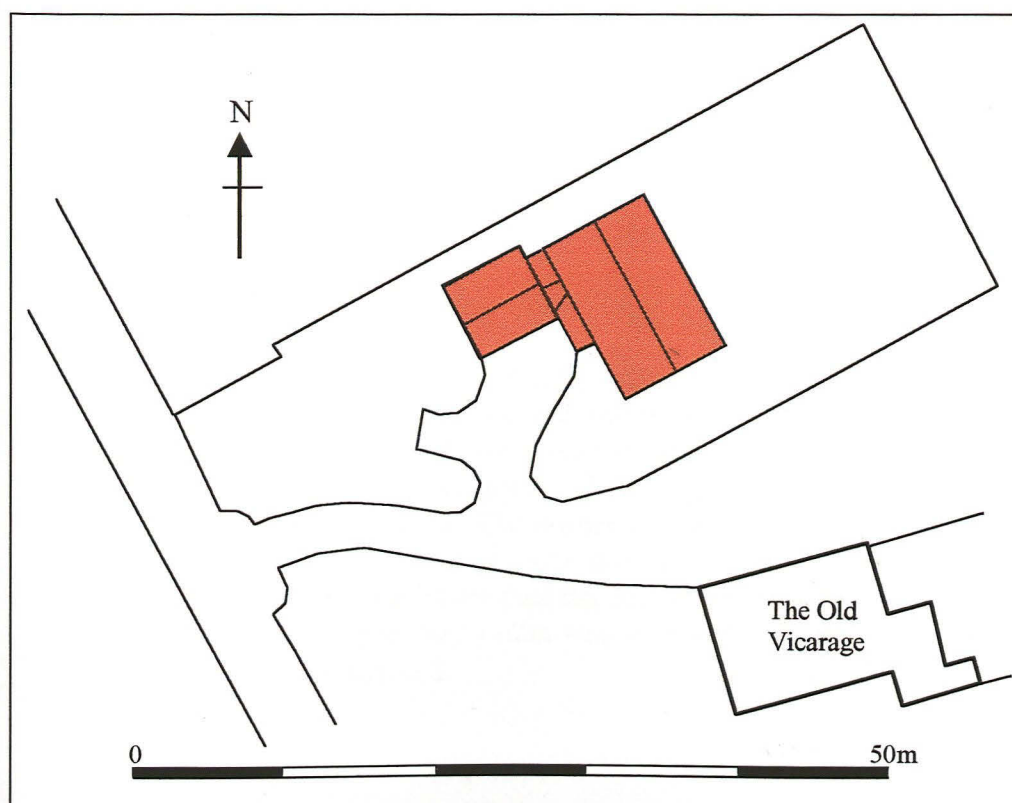
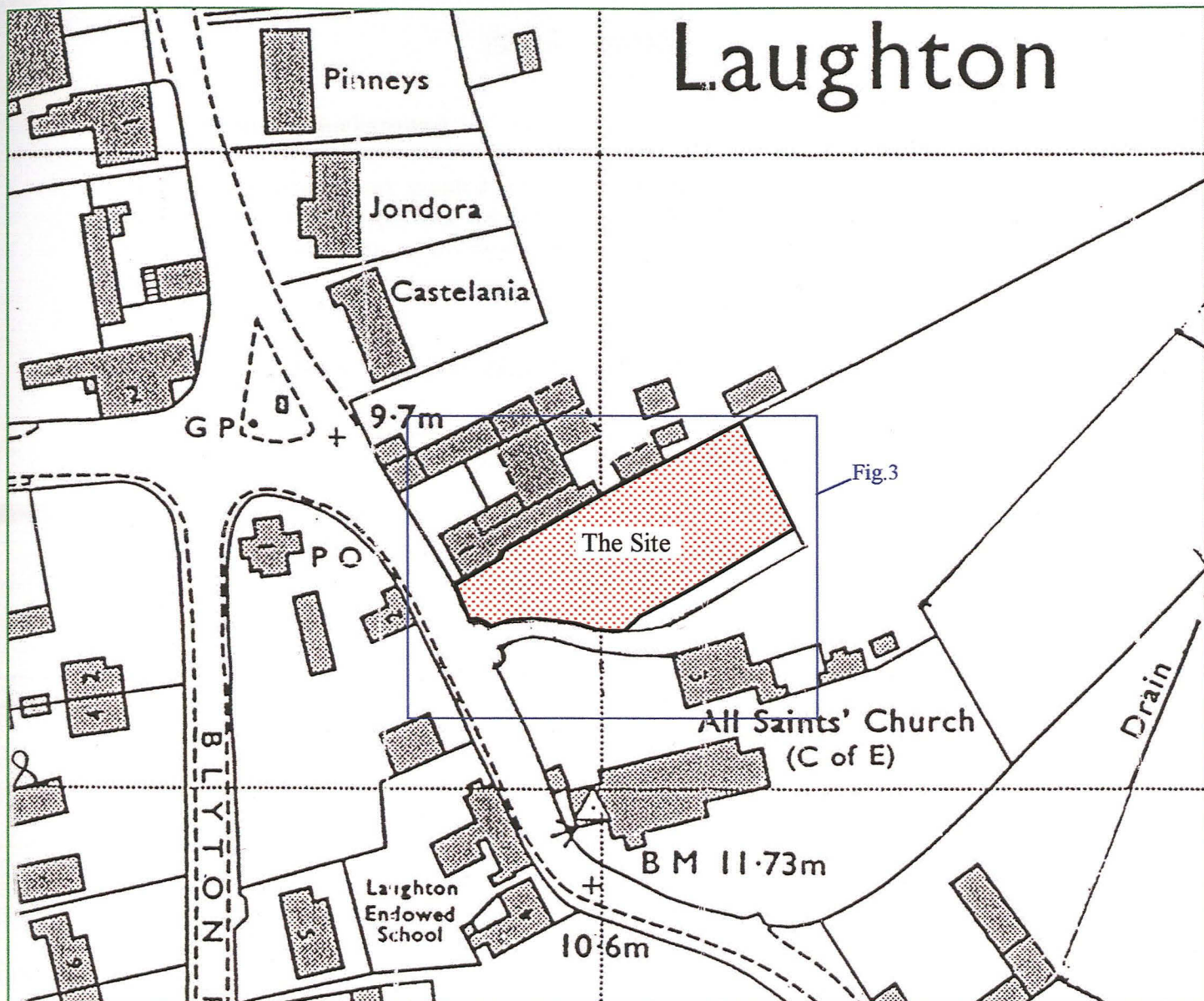


Fig. 2(above): Map extract showing the centre of Laughton village; the area of development is highlighted in red and the area seen in Fig. 3 is outlined in blue.
Scale 1:1000.

Fig. 3 (left): Plan of the development area showing the position of the houseplot (in red).
Scale 1:500

3.0 Planning Background

Planning permission was granted for residential development, comprising a single dwelling, with an incorporated garage (planning ref. M01/P/0890). The permission was granted subject to an archaeological watching brief being undertaken on all groundworks.

4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

Evidence relating to occupation of the area in prehistoric times is poorly understood, although a series of prehistoric artefacts have been recovered from various locations within the parish.

Romano-British occupation is reflected by the site of an important villa; approximately 500m to the north-north-east. A scatter of Roman pottery is also recorded 220m south-west of the present development.

The village probably emerged in the late Saxon period. Laughton is listed in the Domesday Book of 1086 as *Loctone*, from the Old English meaning 'the enclosure, farmstead that can be locked'. An earlier reference (from Anglo Saxon wills), dated to 1066 – 1068, records an earlier form of the village name as *æt Lohtune* (Cameron 1998). The village was in the wapentake of Corringham, with the two principal landowners in 1086 being: Roger of Poitou and Guy of Craon (Morgan and Thorn 1986).

The development site is situated 40m north of the parish church. All Saints was partially rebuilt in the 19th century, although 12th/13th century Decorated and Perpendicular elements survive (Pevsner and Harris 1989).

A previous evaluation by Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) on a development less than 350m to the north-west exposed a number of post-medieval boundary ditches, a pit and a pond (Albone 1998). A watching brief in the same year by PCA recorded a number of features that were mainly undated. A cluster of post-medieval iron-working slag from the watching brief may be tentatively attributed to a smithing area (Albone 1998).

5.0 Methodology

The site was visited on 22.4.2002, when foundation trenches were cut for the house and garage. This work was undertaken with a JCB excavator employing a 450mm wide bucket. The foundation trenches were generally 0.6 – 0.7m wide and not deeper than 0.8m, with two exceptions: following an inspection by the building inspector, it was agreed that, in the SW corner of the house plot, where the ground had been loosened by the removal of a tree during clearance, the foundation trenches should be excavated to a depth of 1m (see fig. 3). At the east end of the foundation trench for the north wall of the house, a c2m length was excavated to a depth of 1m where earlier wall had to be removed.

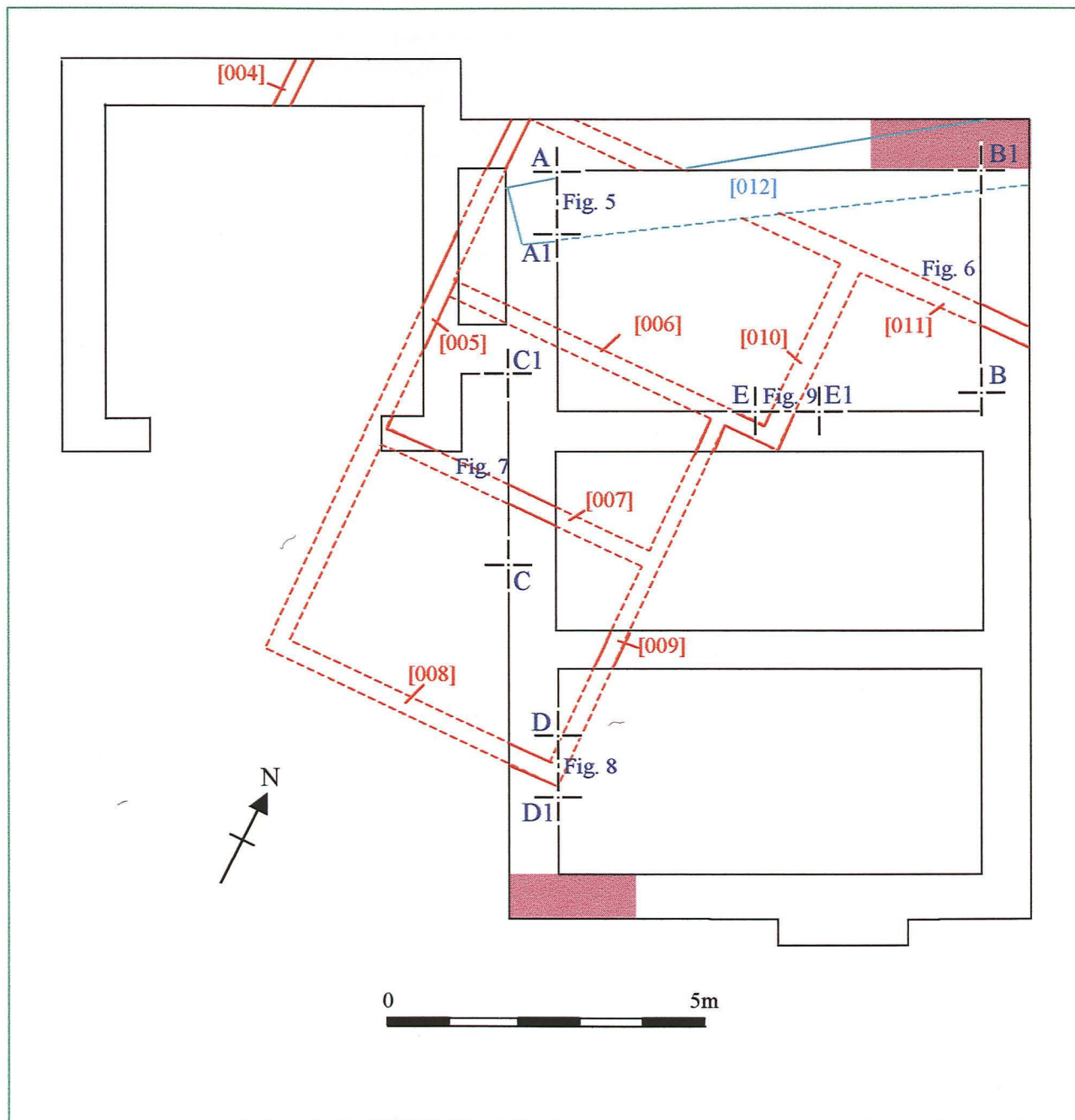


Fig. 4: Plan of the foundation trenches of the house and garage, showing the actual and projected lines of the medieval building (red) and the post-medieval wall (turquoise). Positions of illustrated sections (figs. 5-9) are shown in blue and the trenches excavated to a depth of 1m are shown in maroon. Scale 1:100

All excavation work was monitored continuously to ensure that any archaeological features exposed were identified and recorded.

The archaeological fieldwork entailed the cleaning by hand of all exposed surfaces, followed by a thorough inspection. All archaeological deposits exposed by this method were subjected to limited excavation to assess their nature/dimensions and to attempt to recover datable material. These investigations resulted in the production of written descriptions of each layer on standard watching brief context recording sheets. Colour photographs and scale drawings compliment these accounts.

6.0 Results (Fig. 4)

The modern topsoil, context 001, was 0.28-0.46m deep, and consisted of a very dark brown slightly silty sand loam, containing occasional small rounded flint derived pebbles and rare charcoal flecks. This topsoil was common to the whole site. Pottery finds were not common on this site, and 001 yielded two of the three sherds recovered: a large sherd of a late medieval local fabric bowl dated to the 14th/15th century and a large sherd of a Bourne D ware jug dated mid-15th – mid- 17th century. Also recovered from 001, was the iron and antler handle of a knife, of a type in use in the late 17th to early 18th century.

Beneath the topsoil was a dirty greyish brown compact slightly clayey sand (002), which contained occasional small stone fragments, rounded pebbles and rare charcoal flecks, extending over most of the plot to a thickness of 0.15-0.42m. This layer yielded a sherd from the base of a brown glazed earthenware ?bowl dating to the 17th/18th century and a single piece of fired clay, probably of a post-medieval or modern date.

The subsoil 002 generally sealed a mid-red-brown marl which was occasionally chalk-flecked and also contained patches of locally deposited gravel (003). This material was interpreted as weathered Mercia mudstone.

In the northern part of the house plot, a brick foundation was encountered (figs. 5&6). This foundation, [012], was constructed primarily of handmade brick (220mm x 110mm x 65mm in size) with occasional small and medium limestone fragments as infill. The bonding material was a friable lime mortar. Foundation [012] extended from the NW corner of the house plot to the NE corner, where it continued beyond the development footprint – a distance of some 8.3m. It was 0.98m wide and up to 0.22m thick. The iron and antler knife handle was recovered from the topsoil in the vicinity of this wall foundation.

A discontinuous layer of cobbles was seen abutting the SE side of [012] in the trench for the NE wall of the house. This layer, 013, comprised rounded water-worn granite or quartzite-derived cobbles, generally 0.1m-0.15m in diameter (the largest being 0.18m in diameter) set in a pinkish redeposited marl/clay containing localised patches of charcoal. Layer 013 was only seen in the north end of the trench for the east wall of the house, where it was 2.6m wide and 0.14m thick.

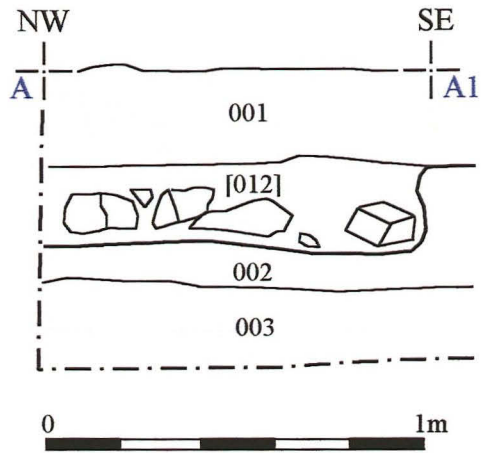


Fig.5: SW facing section across wall foundation [012]. Scale 1:20.

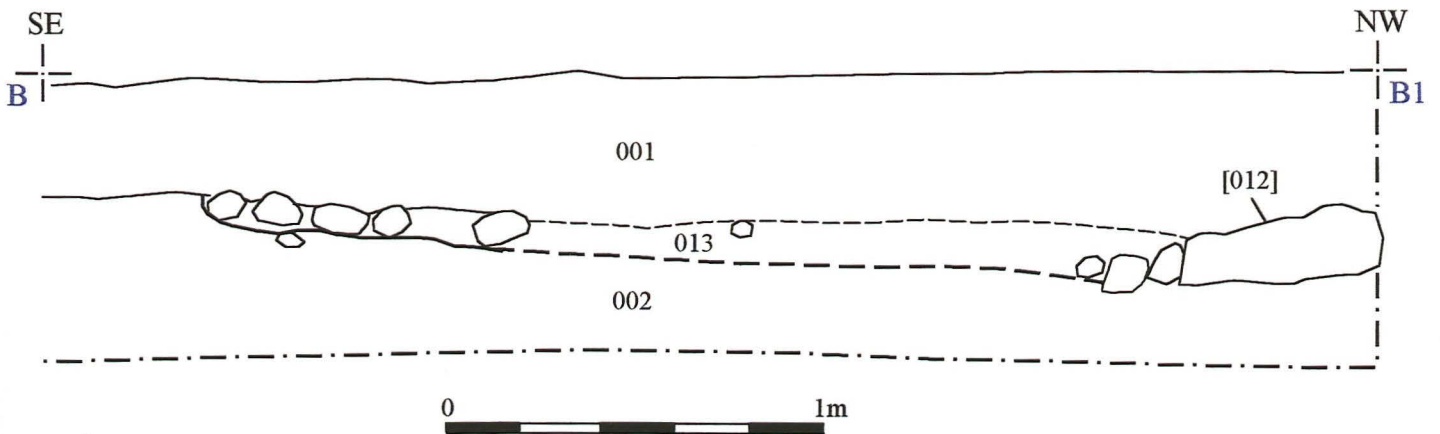


Fig.6: NE facing section showing wall foundation [012] and cobble layer 013. Scale 1:20.

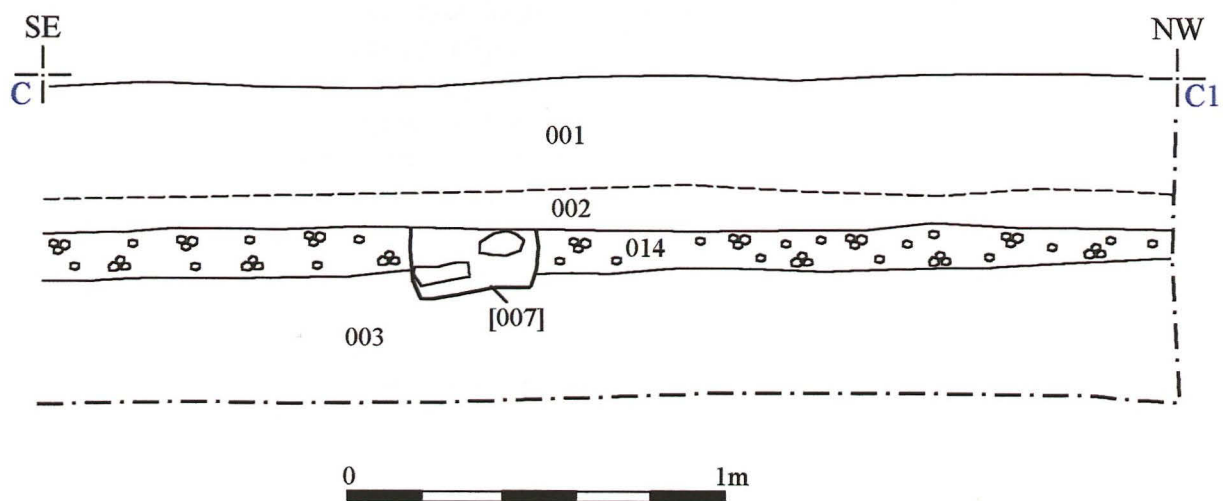


Fig. 7: NE facing section showing wall foundation [007] and gravel layer 014. Scale 1:20.

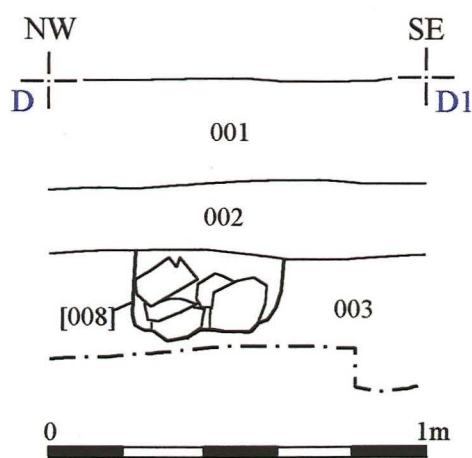


Fig. 8: SW facing section across wall foundation [008]. Scale 1:20.

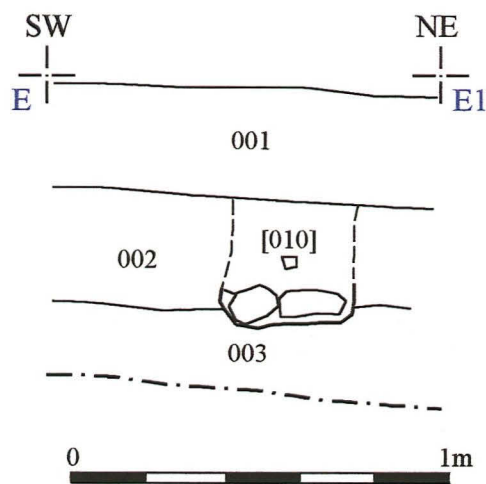


Fig. 9: SE facing section across wall foundation [010]. Scale 1:20.

As machining of the trenches progressed, localised patches of limestone were encountered, which, upon close inspection of the trench sections proved to be the remains of wall foundations (figs. 7-9). These foundations were constructed of medium and large limestone fragments, generally c0.25m on a side and 0.07m thick (the largest being 0.4m square x 0.1m thick), set in a mid-greenish grey clay bonding. The foundations themselves (context numbers [004] – [011]) were generally 0.4m wide and varied between 0.18m and 0.32m thick.

In the trenches on the SW side of the house, a gravel layer was exposed; abutting walls [006] – [009]. This layer, 014, consisted of mid-greenish grey poorly sorted medium gravel with occasional small angular limestone fragments (up to 0.05m in size) and occasional localised sandy patches. Layer 014 was seen in an area some 8m x 4m and was evenly deposited to a thickness of 0.14m.

7.0 Discussion and Conclusions

The construction work for this property disturbed deposits and features of archaeological significance.

The discovery of the remains of two buildings in the area of the house plot is very interesting. The later building, attributed a post-medieval date because of the building materials and method of construction, does not appear on the tithe map of 1849 or on any of the old Ordnance Survey maps of the area. Only one wall of this building was observed, and this shares the alignment of the property boundary 6m to the north. The wall is associated with a cobbled surface to the south, which probably represents an exterior surface such as a courtyard. The narrowness of this building, coupled with its location across a courtyard from the old vicarage would suggest a function as a stable or outbuilding of some kind, demolished before 1849.

The earlier building, extrapolated from limestone foundations seen in the sections of the foundation trenches, is not aligned on any existing boundaries, or the alignment of the old vicarage itself. This suggests that the building predates these boundaries, placing it in the medieval period (as is borne out by its method of construction). The limestone foundations are only 0.4m wide, suggesting that they are likely to have carried sill beams of a timber-framed structure. The gravel layer associated with this building may represent a floor surface but seems more likely to be a permeable layer deposited below a floor to allow free drainage. The location of such a structure, well away from the medieval frontage, suggests either a high-status building (if free-standing) or conversely a barn or large outbuilding associated with a street-frontage property.

The location of this development, at some distance from Church Lane, has meant that any investigation of a possible street-frontage property has not been possible. Any subsequent work in the vicinity of the plot, especially in the area of the frontage, would allow a more positive interpretation of the features encountered on this occasion.

7.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank Mr & Mrs J Crowther for the commission and their assistance during the watching brief. Thanks are also due to J Young for the specialist pottery archive and J Cowgill for the small finds report.

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10.0 Appendices

10.1 Appendix 1: Colour Plates



Plate 1: General view of the site during excavation, looking SW.



Plate 2: General view of the site, showing the foundation trenches of the house itself, looking NE.



Plate 3: General view of the site during excavation of the foundation trenches, looking SW. The proximity of the church to the site is clear from this shot.



Plate 4: Brick wall foundation [012], seen in the foundation trench for the north wall of the house, looking SW



Plate 5: Limestone wall foundation [008], seen in the foundation trench for the west wall of the house, looking NE.



Plate 6: Gravel layer [014], seen in the foundation trench for the west wall of the house, looking NW. Limestone wall foundation [006] is located below the scale bar.

10.2 Appendix 2: Pottery Archive

Pottery Archive OVL02

Jane Young Lindsey Archaeological Services

context	cname	full name	sub fabric	form type	sherds	weight	part	description	date
001	LMLOC	Late Medieval local fabrics	light OX/R/OX;fine-med sandy;hard	bowl	1	68	rim	large fresh sherd;? LSW3 but quartz looks finer;everted rim;cu specks in glaze	14th to 15th
001	BOU	Bourne D ware		jug	1	30	BS	large fresh sherd	15th to mid 17th
002	BERTH	Brown glazed earthenware		bowl ?	1	21	base		17th to 18th

10.3 Appendix 3: Small Finds Report

The bulk and registered finds from The Old Vicarage, Laughton (OVL 02).

Context 001, Iron and Antler Knife Handle; Late 17th – 18th century.

Scale-tang knife with three iron rivets that attach the three handle elements together. The knife has broken at the most vulnerable and narrowest point where the blade tapers to form the shoulder plate and tang at the shoulder (the blade is missing). The shoulder plate is made of iron and is a reduced form of bolster only 3mm wide – no longer the extended form so common in the 17th century. On both handle scales are four drilled holes forming a simple diamond motif, repeated three times between the rivets. The measurements of the object: length 96mm; well-preserved antler handle length 85mm; maximum width 22mm; width at shoulder 13mm.

This knife handle would have been part of a matching set of knife and fork, if not a larger canteen, which was just becoming fashionable, or more importantly affordable amongst the rural gentry. Up until the mid-17th century only knives were used (and sometimes supplied by the host) at the table, forks being a novelty, and purpose made sets of tableware were considered a desirable luxury. Spoons were rarely produced as a part of the set until the end of the 18th century.

Context 002, Reduced fired clay; Post medieval/Modern.

Made from a probably non-local very sandy fabric. Could be a fragment of a brick or tile but the fabric type suggests that this may not be the case. Original object type from which this is a small fragment is therefore uncertain. Weight 26g.

The finds were recovered from the topsoil and subsoil, not from any recorded feature. The knife suggests that the Vicarage may have been occupied in the 18th century, unless the handle is from an heirloom. If the object was broken and discarded in the early 18th century, or even more so in the late 17th century, it would have been deemed a valuable loss to the household. Knife and fork sets were not repairable because of the types of iron used in their production.

Jane Cowgill©

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