

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

L I N C O L N

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF REPORT;
NEWTON ON TRENT PRIMARY SCHOOL,
HIGH STREET, NEWTON ON TRENT,
LINCOLNSHIRE**

NGR: SK 8325 74400
SITE CODE: NOTS02
LCNCC ACC. NO: 2002.344
Planning ref. M01/P/1128



Conservation
Services

05 NOV 2002

Highways & Planning
Directorate



EVENT LIS361

SOURCE L19616
L19617

PRN 54987

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF REPORT;
NEWTON ON TRENT PRIMARY SCHOOL,
HIGH STREET, NEWTON ON TRENT,
LINCOLNSHIRE**

NGR: SK 8325 74480
SITE CODE: NOTS02
LCNCC ACC. NO: 2002.344
Planning ref. M01/P/1128

Report prepared for
Hyder Business Services
by Chris Clay
October 2002

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln)
61 High Street
Newton on Trent
Lincoln
LN1 2JP
Tel. & Fax. 01777 228155

© Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln)

CONTENTS

	Summary	1
1.0	Introduction	2
2.0	Site location and description	2
3.0	Planning background	2
4.0	Archaeological and historical background	3
5.0	Methodology	3
6.0	Results	4
6.1	Classroom 1	4
6.2	Classroom 2	4
7.0	Discussion and conclusion	4
8.0	Effectiveness of methodology	5
9.0	Acknowledgements	5
10.0	References	6
11.0	Site Archive	6
	Appendix 1: Colour plates	7
	Appendix 2: List of archaeological contexts	8

List of Figures

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

Fig.2: Site location, showing the new classrooms (in red) in relation to the existing school building (scale 1:200)

Fig. 3: Plan and section view of horse grave exposed in classroom 1 (scale 1:20)

Fig. 4: Sample section, classroom 2 (scale 1:20)

List of plates

Pl. 1: General view of the site, looking east. The JCB stands in the approximate location of new classroom 1

Pl. 2: Horse skeleton exposed in the foundation trenches of classroom 1, looking north-east

Pl. 3: Stripped area of classroom two, looking north

Pl. 4: Stratigraphic sequence in classroom 2, looking east

Summary

- An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the groundworks for two new classrooms at Newton on Trent Primary School, Newton on Trent, Lincolnshire.
- A Roman fort and pottery kilns lie close to the village, and the school is in close proximity to the parish church, in the medieval core of the village.
- For the most part, the foundation trenches of the new buildings were devoid of archaeological deposits. However, a single burial of an adult horse was exposed, dated to the late 17th century by a clay tobacco pipe bowl within the grave fill.

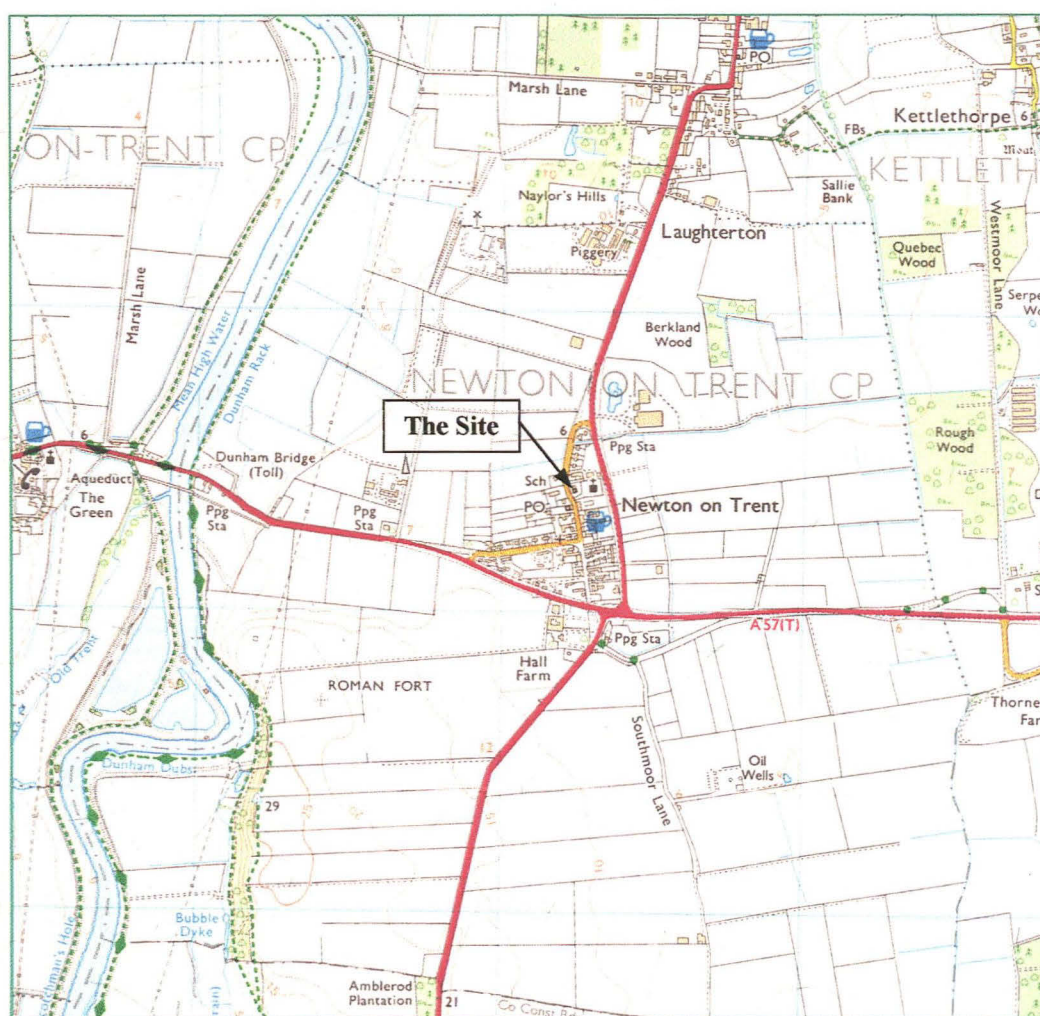


Fig.1: General site location (scale 1:25,000)
(O.S. Copyright License No. A1 515 21 A0001)

1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) was commissioned by Hyder Business Services to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks for two new classrooms at Newton on Trent Primary School, Newton on Trent, Lincolnshire.

These works were undertaken to fulfil the objectives of a formal project brief issued by the Assistant Built Environment Officer, and a project specification prepared by Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln). This approach is consistent 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 have been deposited with the commissioning body and the County Sites and Monuments Record for Lincolnshire. Reports will also be deposited at the City and County Museum, Lincoln, along with an ordered project archive for long term storage and curation.

2.0 Site location and description

Newton on Trent is in the administrative district of West Lindsey, approximately 14 kilometres west of Lincoln, on the east bank of the River Trent, that marks the Lincolnshire/Nottinghamshire border. The school is on the north side of the village, less than 50m west of the parish church.

The current development comprises two new classroom blocks; one to the south of existing school buildings, a second block attached to the east side of the school complex.

The local geology of the area consists of Jurassic deposits of Mercia Mudstone (British Geological Survey, 1967). This is overlain by coarse loamy and clayey soils of the Dunnington Heath group (Hodge et.al, 1984).

Central National Grid Reference SK 8325 7445

3.0 Planning background

Full planning permission was granted for the erection of two new classrooms to replace temporary classrooms (planning ref. M01/P/1128). This permission was granted subject to the undertaking of a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording on all associated groundworks.

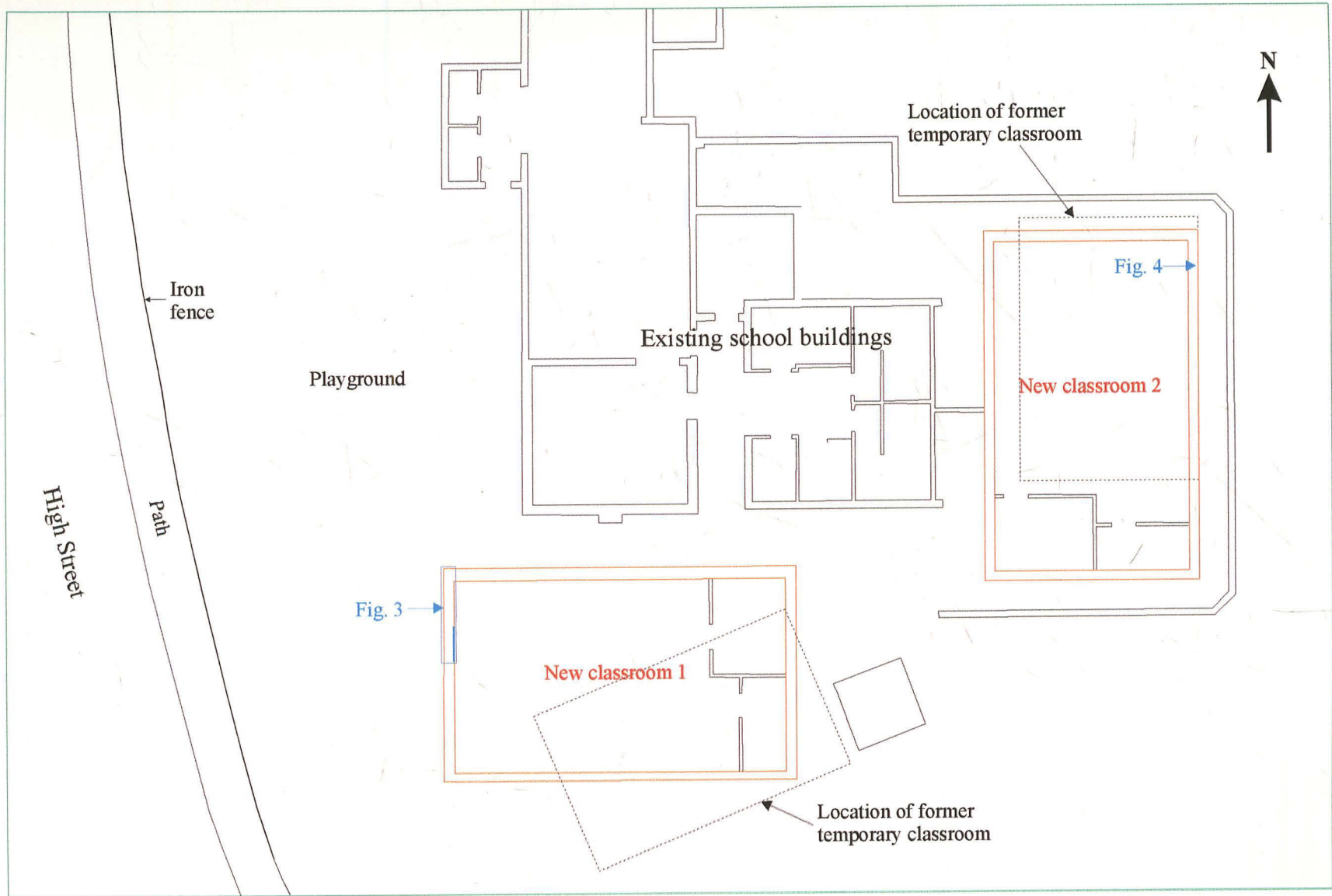


Fig. 2: Site location, showing the new classrooms (in red) in relation to the existing school buildings (scale 1:200)

4.0 Archaeological and historical background

The earliest evidence of archaeological activity in the area is derived from cropmarks recorded by aerial photography. In fields to the east of the village, a circular cropmark suggests a possible prehistoric burial mound (SMR ref.52587), as well as linear and enclosure cropmarks indicative of prehistoric settlement of the area (SMR refs. 52579, 52586). Further south, medieval ridge and furrow, a possible prehistoric linear ditch system, and a further ring ditch have also been identified from aerial photographs.

South-west of the village is the site of a Roman fort. This is a vexillation fort, a 25 acre site that would have housed approximately half of one legion while on campaign (c.3000 men), and dates to the very early military occupation of Britain (Whitwell, 1992).

In 1983, during construction of the bypass, Romano-British pottery kilns were exposed, no doubt exporting their product along the nearby River Trent (Field and Palmer-Brown 1991).

Newton is a common name, deriving from the Old English *nEwe* + *tġn*, simply meaning 'the new farmstead, estate or village' (Cameron, 1998). The village appears in the Domesday Book as *Neutone*, at which time the archbishop of York owned 100 acres of meadow (Morgan & Thorne, 1986).

The parish church, which is dedicated to St. Peter, lies less than 50m to the east of the school buildings. This has some surviving Norman elements (11th century), although extensively reworked (Pevsner & Harris, 1989).

5.0 Methodology

Prior to the watching brief, two temporary classrooms were demolished, one within the footprint of each new classroom. The area of Classroom 2 was then stripped of topsoil and levelled. Subsequent excavation of the foundation trenches was carried out using a mini-excavator, fitted with a 0.8m wide toothed bucket. The trenches were excavated to a maximum depth of c.1.2m in Classroom 1 and 0.6m in Classroom 2.

All plan and section surfaces were examined and intermittently cleaned, to examine the stratigraphic sequence. Where necessary, limited excavation by hand was carried out to establish the profile, orientation, date and function of exposed archaeological features. These features were accurately plotted on a site plan and section drawings were made at a scale of 1:20. Context information was recorded on standard watching brief record sheets. A colour photographic record was maintained, selected prints from which have been reproduced in this report.

The monitoring of the groundworks involved a total of thirteen visits between August 1st and September 12th, carried out by the author and Rachel Gardiner.

6.0 Results

6.1 Classroom 1

Beneath the tarmac surface of the playground was a 0.3m deep mixed deposit of light grey, poorly sorted pebbles, (004), interpreted as a levelling/bedding deposit for the playground. This sealed a 0.6m deep subsoil of grey/brown clayey sand, (005). The underlying deposit was natural geology, (003), a compact deposit of reddish grey mudstone, with occasional lenses of grey clay.

In the western end of the foundation trench, excavations exposed a disturbed deposit of animal bone. Rapid investigation of this area defined a grave cut, [006], approximately 0.5m wide, running from the western edge of the trench, extending beyond the limit of excavation to the south-east (fig. 3). Further excavation exposed the complete remains of an articulated horse, [007], with the skull situated to the north-west, partially truncated by machine excavation. The skeleton was rapidly defined, photographed *in situ*, and excavated. A fragment of mandible was sent to a specialist for species confirmation (J. Rackham, *pers.comm.*).

After the skeleton had been recovered, the remainder of the grave fill, (008), was removed. This was a mixed deposit of natural mudstone, and grey sandy clay, suggesting that the grave had been rapidly backfilled. This fill incorporated the bowl of a clay tobacco pipe, dating to between 1680-90 (J Cowgill, *pers. comm.*).

The grave cut was steep sided, with a flat base, and had a total depth of 0.82m.

6.2 Classroom 2

The first phase of excavation in this area involved stripping and levelling the site. This involved the removal of approximately 0.9m of material on the east side of the development area, and 0.6m on the west side. The uppermost deposit was a 0.4m deep dark brown/grey topsoil, (001), that overlay a mid brown sandy clay subsoil, with numerous fragments of building rubble, (002). Beneath the subsoil, the natural mudstone (003) was exposed.

After the levelling, the foundation trenches were excavated to a depth of 0.6m, through the remainder of the subsoil, (002), and the natural, (003). No archaeological artefacts or deposits were exposed.

7.0 Discussion and conclusion

The foundation trenches of the two classrooms were largely devoid of deposits of archaeological significance. The only feature of note was the horse burial in the western foundation trench of Classroom 1. A clay tobacco pipe fragment recovered from the fill of the grave places it within the later 17th century, between 1680 and 1690.

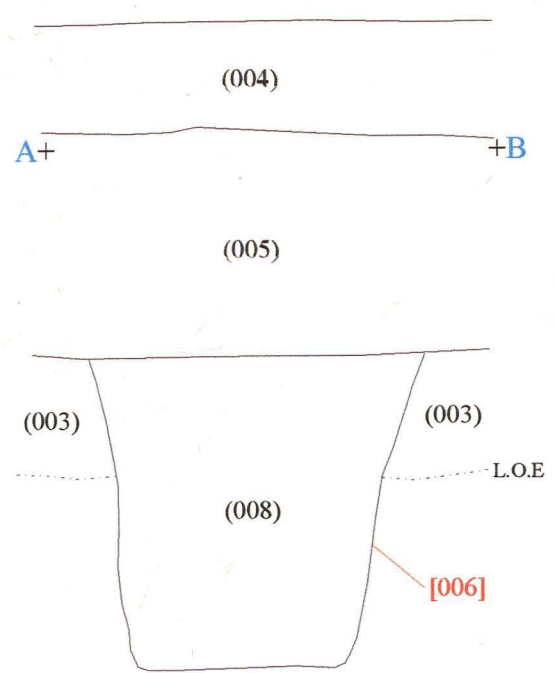
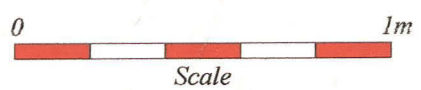
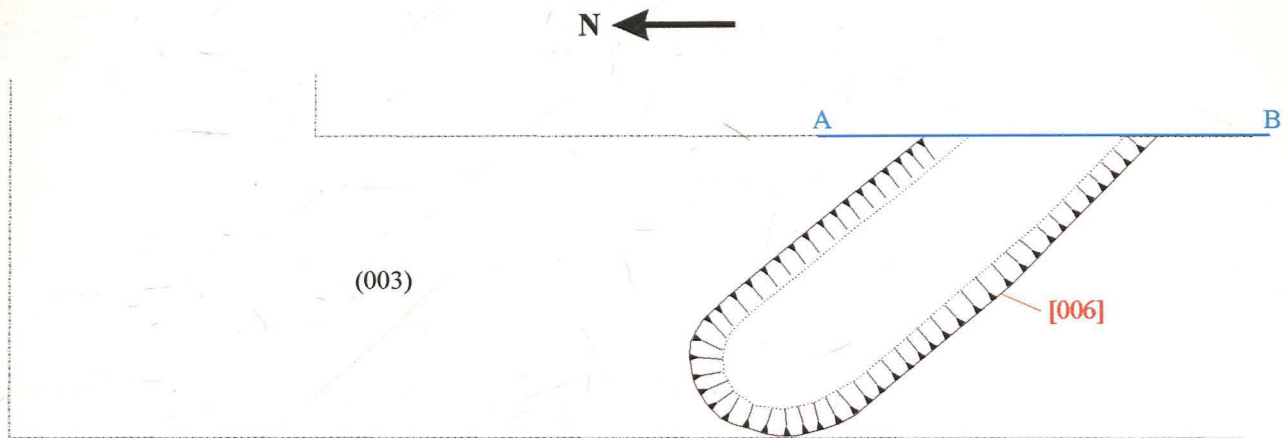


Fig. 3: Plan and section view of horse grave exposed in classroom 1 (scale 1:20)

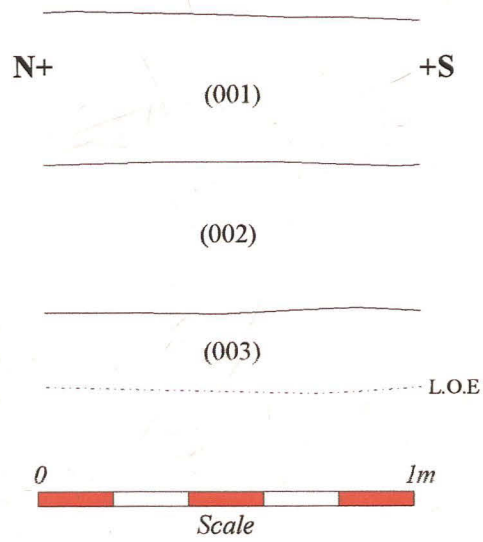


Fig.4: Sample section, classroom 2 (scale 1:20)

Considerable effort had been made to ensure a proper burial, as a deep, steep sided grave was excavated through compact natural mudstone deposits. This suggests that the horse was probably a valued animal; and one that has received full attention after death.

It is difficult to place the burial within a wider context, other than to suggest that it was probably a horse that belonged to a resident of the village, and may have been buried in the corner of a field or private property.

8.0 Effectiveness of methodology

The methodology chosen was appropriate to the development. It allowed a rapid assessment of the archaeological potential of the site. A more detailed level of archaeological intervention was not necessary, as suggested by the limited significance of the deposits exposed.

9.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank Hyder Business Services for this commission.

10.0 References

- British Geological Survey, 1967, *East Retford. England and Wales Sheet 101. Solid and Drift Geology*. One inch series, Keyworth, Nottingham
- Cameron K., 1998, *A dictionary of Lincolnshire place-names*, English Place-Name Society, University of Nottingham, Nottingham
- Field F.N. & Palmer-Brown C., 1991, 'New evidence for a Romano-British greyware pottery industry in the Trent Valley', *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology*, vol. 26, pp.40-56
- Hodge C.A.H., Burton R.G.O., Corbett W.M., Evans R. & Seale R.S., 1984, *Soils and their use in Eastern England*. Bulletin 13, Soil Survey of England and Wales, Harpenden
- Morgan P., & Thorn C., (eds.), 1986, *Domesday Book: vol.31: Lincolnshire*, Phillimore & Co. Ltd, Chichester
- Pevsner N., & Harris J., 1989, *The Buildings of England: Lincolnshire, second edition*, Penguin, London
- Whitwell J.B., 1992, *Roman Lincolnshire*, History of Lincolnshire Committee, Lincoln

11.0 Site archive

The documentary and physical archive for the site is currently in the possession of Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln). This 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 2002.344.

APPENDIX 1: Colour plates



Pl. 1: General view of the site, looking east. The JCB stands in the approximate location of new classroom 1.



Pl. 2: Horse skeleton exposed in the foundation trenches of classroom 1, looking north-east



Pl. 3: Stripped area of classroom two, looking north.



Pl. 4: Stratigraphic sequence in classroom 2, looking east.

APPENDIX 2: List of archaeological contexts

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Description</i>
001	Layer	Dark brown/grey topsoil, classroom 2
002	Layer	Mid brown sandy clay, moderate cbm – subsoil, classroom 2
003	Layer	Natural mudstone
004	Layer	Hardcore bedding deposit for playground surface, classroom 1
005	Layer	Dark grey/brown clayey sand subsoil
006	Cut	Grave cut. Contains [007], (008)
007	Skeleton	Articulated horse inhumation
008	Fill	Fill of grave [006]