

# PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY L I N C O L N

**FONABY FARM,  
near CAISTOR, LINCOLNSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
WATCHING BRIEF REPORT**

Site code	FFC 03
NGR:	TA 1122 0303
LCCM Acc No:	2003.1

*APP: M02/P/0884*



L1E295

Event L14238  
Source L18817  
L18818  
Mon. W54869  
54838  
W52631  
52631

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by S.A. Savage

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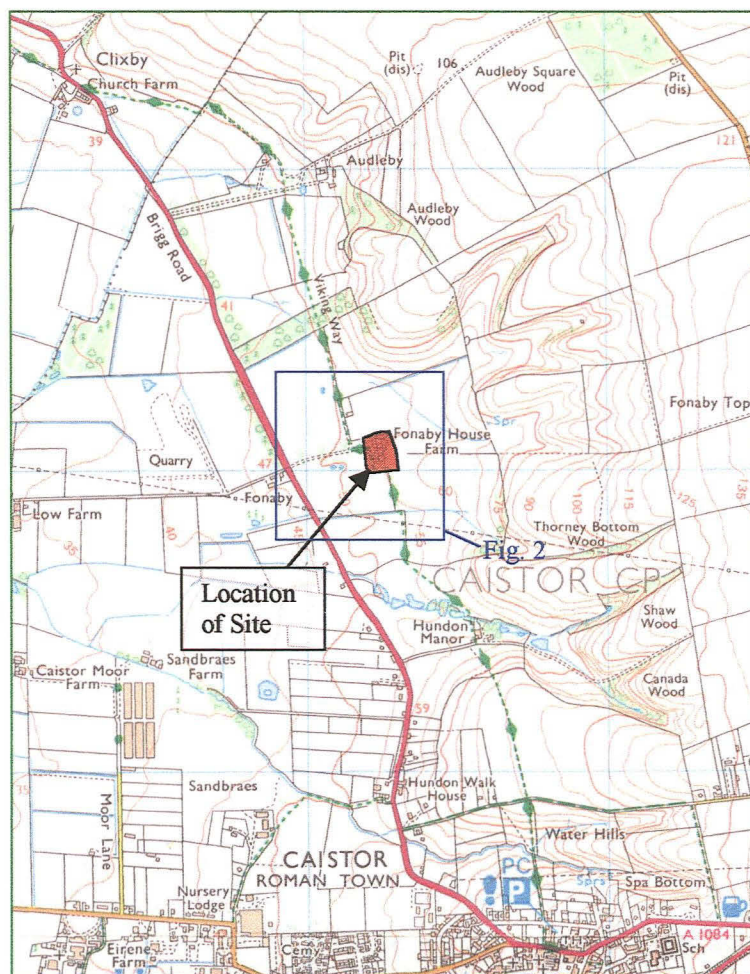
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### Summary

- *An archaeological watching brief took place during the groundworks for a septic tank at Fonaby Farm, near Caistor, Lincolnshire.*
- *The watching brief identified archaeological features of a post-medieval or modern date, including a trench-built wall foundation that predated the Georgian farmhouse.*



**Fig. 1:** Location plan, the site is shown in red, the area illustrated in fig. 2 is outlined in blue. Scale 1:25000. (OS copyright license no AL 515 021 A0001)

## 1.0 Introduction

An archaeological watching brief took place during the groundworks for a septic tank at Fonaby Farm, near Caistor, Lincolnshire (National Grid Reference TA1122 0303). The project was commissioned by Mr Nigel Wood, to fulfil a condition attached to a planning permission (Ref. M02/P/0884).

This report documents the results of the archaeological observation and recording undertaken on 6.1.2003. It has been prepared to meet the requirements of current local guidelines (*Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: A Manual of Archaeological Practice, 1998*); and a formal project specification prepared by this company. 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), and *Standards and guidance for archaeological watching briefs*, (IFA, 1994).

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

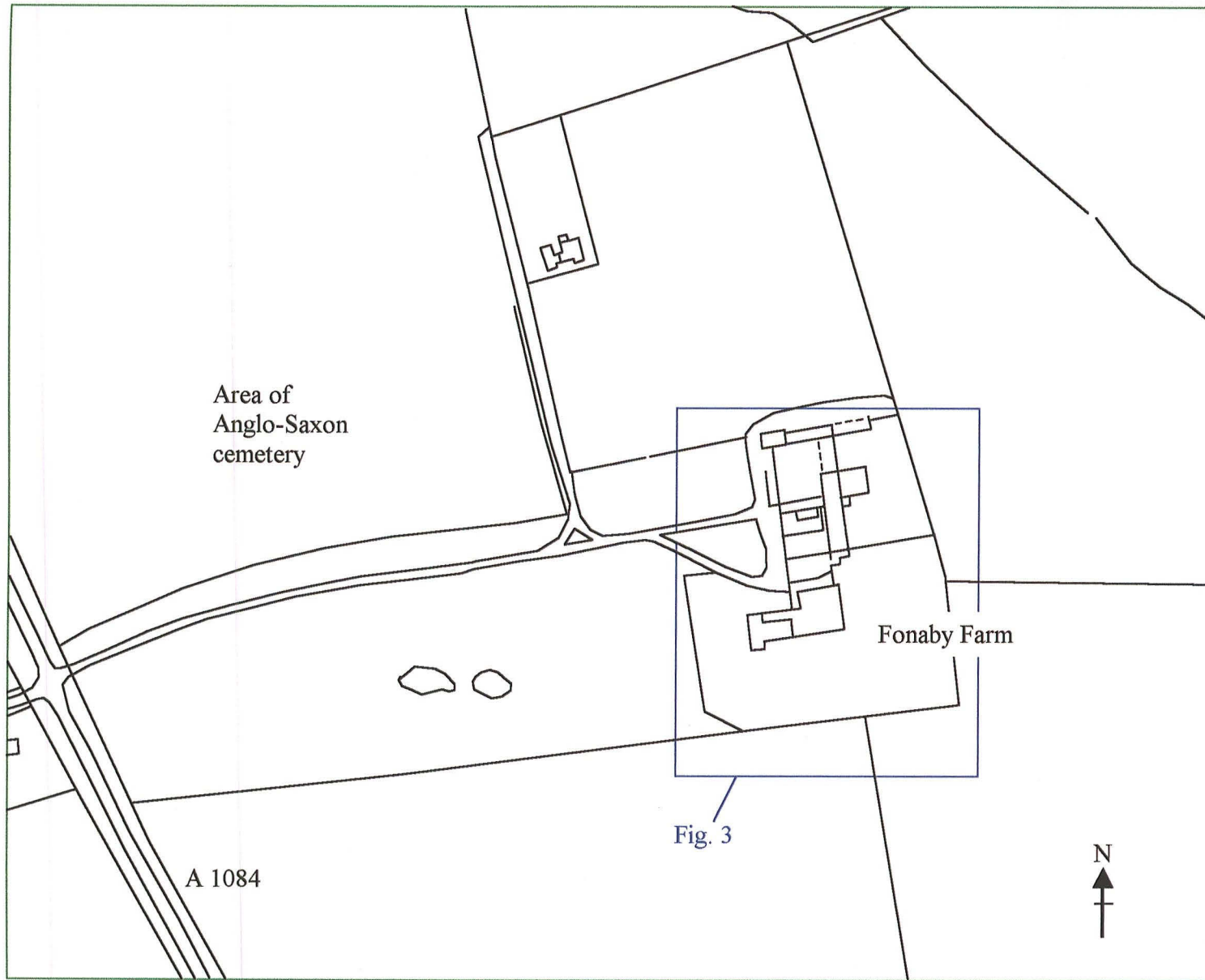
Fonaby Farm lies in the parish of Caistor, approximately 1.6km north-east of the town, and c.13km south-east of Brigg, in the administrative district of West Lindsey. Fonaby is a shrunken medieval village located at the foot of, and towards, the northern end of the Lincolnshire Wolds.

The site of development lies to the east of the former medieval settlement, at National Grid Reference TA1122 0303. It is situated at an altitude approximately 54m above modern sea level, and the upper geology of the area is characterised as windblown sand (drift) over Elsham Sandstone (solid) of the Late Jurassic period. (BGS 1982).

The site of the septic tank lies in short-cropped pasture to the southwest of the farmhouse, and trenches for associated drainage run from an old tank in the garden on the north side of the house around to the west side of the house. The farmhouse stands on a slightly raised platform, and the ground surface slopes gradually downwards from the northeast to the southwest corner of the property, by approximately 0.75m.

## 3.0 Planning Background

Full planning permission was granted for the construction of a septic tank and associated drainage, subject to the undertaking of an archaeological watching brief on all associated groundworks.



**Fig. 2:** Site location plan showing Fonaby Farm and the area of the Fonaby Anglo-Saxon cemetery. Scale 1:2500

#### 4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

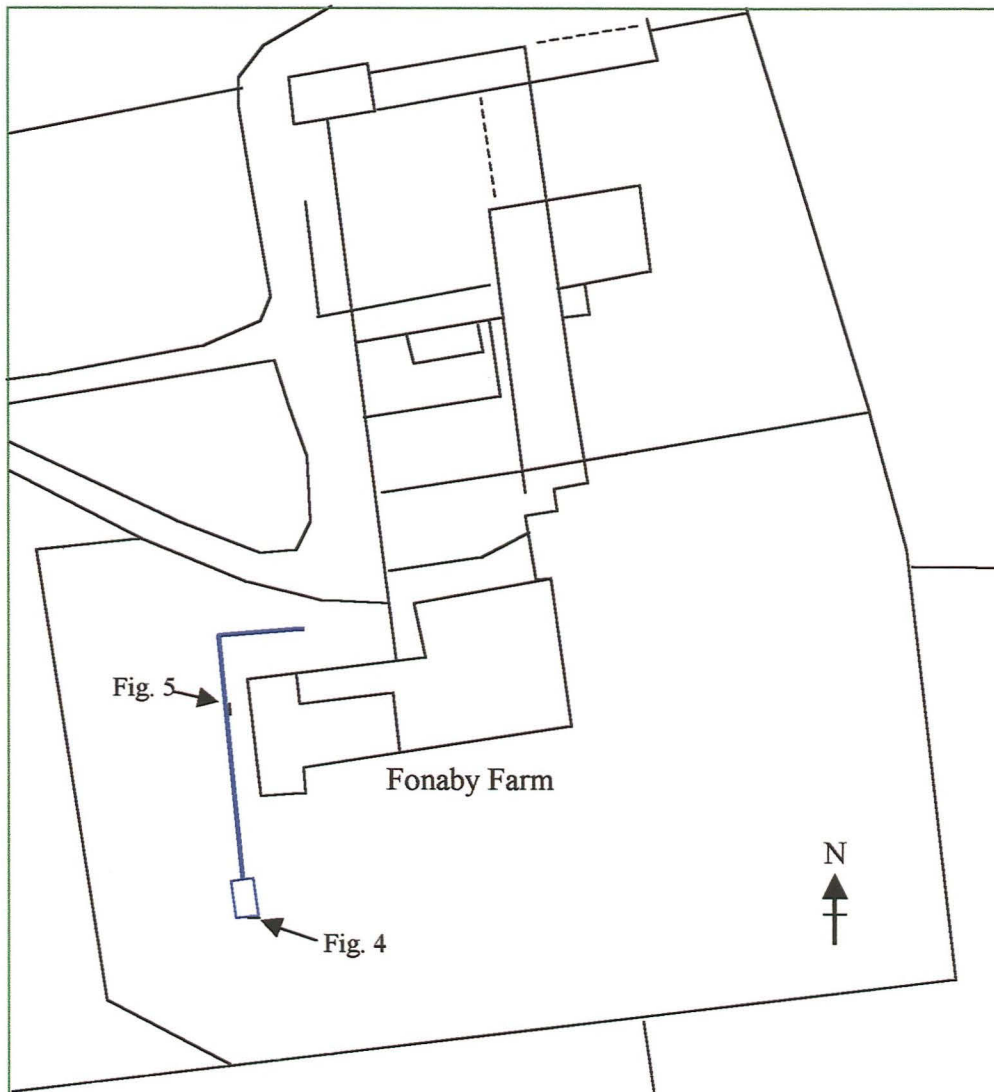
Pre-Roman activity in the area is represented by artefact scatters, chiefly worked flint. Mesolithic flints were found to the west of Fonaby House Farm, on a site which later became an Anglo-Saxon cemetery, and on the west side of Brigg Road (SMR Record nos. 52620 and 52634). The cemetery site also yielded flints of Neolithic date and some Iron Age pottery, while both Neolithic and Bronze Age flints were found to the east of Fonaby House Farm, and by fieldwalking in Chapel Close to the south-east (SMR refs. 52635, 52636, 52672 and 52716).

The small Romano-British town of Caistor is less than 2km to the south-west of the site, but evidence of Roman activity in the area is also limited to artefact scatters. Both Iron Age and Romano-British pottery was found on the Anglo-Saxon cemetery site, and much Romano-British grey ware has come from the fields immediately west of the farm (SMR refs. 52716, 52717 and 52621). Fieldwalking in Chapel Close identified a sparse scatter of Romano-British pottery.

Fonaby was one of the settlements listed in the Domesday Survey of 1086 (*Fuldenebi*, a population of only eighteen freemen attached to the manorial lands of Earl Morcar), and is therefore likely to be of Anglo-Saxon origin (Morgan & Thorne 1986). An extensive Anglo-Saxon cemetery is recorded 250m to the north west of the development site. It was excavated in 1956, and contained both cremation and inhumation burials (SMR ref. 50586). The quality of the artefacts indicates that *Fuldenebi* was a prosperous settlement, while the variation in burial practice suggests a long period of occupation.

After the Domesday Survey, there are no documentary references to Fonaby as an individual settlement until the 19<sup>th</sup> century: it is otherwise a junior member, either explicitly or implicitly, of Caistor, and presumably had ceased as a village by the 16<sup>th</sup> century, if not earlier. In the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, the site of Fonaby House Farm was the principal Lincolnshire residence of the Maddison family, best known through Sir Ralph Maddison (d. 1656), who amassed a considerable fortune and estates scattered around the county. When this was dissipated, partly through partitioning between heiresses, the present farmhouse replaced the mansion. Both the deserted village of Fonaby and the former mansion house can now be seen only as slight earthworks in the farmyard and garden of Fonaby House Farm (SMR ref. 52631). The villages of Hundon to the south and Audleby to the north appear to have been deserted at a similar time (one taxpayer was recorded in Hundon in 1524), and also replaced by a single substantial building.

A series of cropmarks in fields to the west and north-west of Fonaby House Farm, visible on aerial photographs, represent field boundaries and enclosures from medieval and post-medieval land use (SMR refs. 52642 and 52644). Industrial activity in the area, other than for drainage, is limited, but the SMR records a disused brickworks to the south-east of the farm, on the far side of Brigg Road (ref. no. 52666).



**Fig. 3:** Plan of Fonaby Farm showing the location of the septic tank and the associated drainage trench (in blue) along with the locations of the recorded sections (figs. 4&5). Scale 1:1000



## 5.0 Methodology

The site was visited on 6.1.2003, when the pit for the septic tank was excavated, along with the trenches for the associated drainage (fig. 3). This work was undertaken with a JCB excavator employing a 0.85m wide toothed bucket for the septic tank pit, and a 0.3m wide trenching bucket for the drainage trenches. The tank pit was 3m x 5m in plan and was initially excavated to a depth of 2.3m, approximately 0.5m into the underlying natural sand, to allow archaeological recording. It was later excavated to its full depth of 5m. The drainage trenches were a maximum of 1.2m deep. This 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

The uppermost layer, context 001, was 0.30-0.35m deep, and consisted of a very dark greyish brown, slightly silty sand, containing occasional small gravel, small brick and tile fragments, and some modern and Victorian pottery.

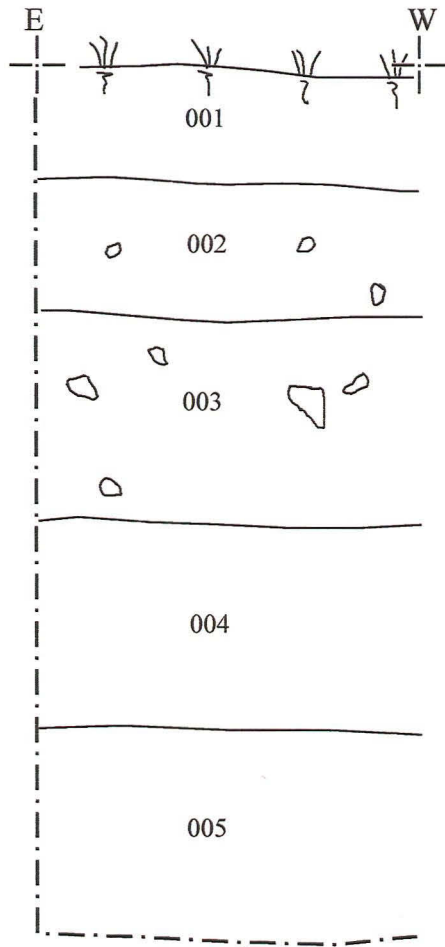
Beneath 001 was a dark grey-brown silty sand (002), which contained occasional brick and tile fragments (bricks 230mm x 115mm x 54mm in size). This layer, up to 0.34m in thickness, was a subsoil deposit.

Sealed beneath 002 was a mid brown chalky clay layer, 0.2m – 0.55m in thickness (003). This contained occasional small and medium brick and tile fragments (bricks 210mm x 105mm x 70mm in size), mortar and cinder lenses. This layer appears to represent a demolition horizon on the south and west sides of the house.

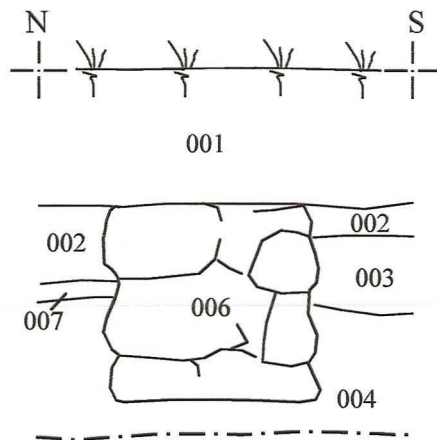
Beneath 003 lay a very dark brown fine sand (004), up to 0.54m in thickness. This material was interpreted as windblown sand, naturally deposited at the base of the Wolds.

In the area of the septic tank, 004 stripped off onto the natural geology, which was a clean, mid yellow fine sand (005). In the pipe trenches, excavation only reached the layer of wind-blown sand (004).

In the NW part of the site, the foundations of the former house were seen (006). These were built of medium and large roughly-squared sandstone blocks (up to 0.56m x 0.36m x 0.28m in size). The foundation was trench built in a straight-sided, flat-bottomed trench, 0.53m wide and 0.52m deep (see fig. 5).



**Fig. 4:** North facing section of septic tank pit. Scale 1:20



**Fig. 5:** West facing section of drainage trench, showing wall foundation [006]. Scale 1:20

On the north side of the house, north of foundation 006, a layer of dark greyish brown silty sand containing occasional brick and tile fragments and mortar flecks was encountered between the subsoil 002 and the windblown sand 004. This layer, 007, was only 0.1m thick and, because of the size of the bricks encountered within it (230mm x 115mm x 54mm), this layer has been identified as construction debris from the building of the Georgian front onto the house.

## 7.0 Discussion and Conclusions

The watching brief encountered features of relatively limited archaeological significance. Although the new development is located within an area of medieval cropmark remains, no features of this date were encountered. The features encountered shed some light on the nature of the house itself, particularly the construction of the Georgian front, the partial demolition, and the nature of the house prior to its construction.

## 8.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

The methodology employed allowed the presence/absence, the depth and (to a significantly lesser extent) the broad dating of archaeological features to be determined.

## 9.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank Mr Nigel Wood for the commission and the assistance of Mrs Wood during the evaluation. Thanks are also due to J Young for the specialist pottery archive.

## 10.0 Bibliography

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Cook, Alison M, 1981, *Occasional Papers in Lincolnshire History and Archaeology 6: The Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Fonaby, Lincolnshire*. The Society for Lincolnshire History and Archaeology, Sleaford.

Knowles, D & Hadcock, R N, 1971, *Medieval Religious Houses of England and Wales*

Morgan, P & Thorn, C (eds), 1986, *Domesday Book: Lincolnshire*

Pevsner, N. & Harris, J. 1989 *The Buildings of England: Lincolnshire* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition revised by N. Antram). London, Penguin.

**APPENDIX 1: Colour Plates.**



**Plate 1 (above):** Excavations for the septic tank on the SW side of the farmhouse, looking north-east.  
**Plate 2 (right):** The drainage trench along the west side of the farmhouse, looking south.



**Plate 3:** North facing section of septic tank pit, looking south.



**Plate 4:** West facing section of pipe trench, showing wall foundation [006], looking east.

APPENDIX 2: Pottery archive list  
J Young

context	cname	full name	form type	sherds	weight	decoration	part	description	date
003	HUM	Humberware	jug	1	62	thumbbed basal edge	base	stacking scar	late 13th to 14th

**APPENDIX 3: Context summary.**

<b>Context</b>	<b>Description</b>
001	Topsoil
002	Subsoil below 200
003	Demolition rubble deposit
004	Windblown Sand
005	Natural sand
006	Wall Foundation
007	Construction debris deposit