

**LAND ADJACENT TO 12, MILL LANE
CAISTOR, LINCOLNSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
REPORT**

Site code	MLCA 03
NGR:	TE 1195 6125 TA 511945 401265
LCCM Acc No:	2003.306
Planning ref.	M03/P/0182

Report prepared for Allison Cadle

by

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Highways & Planning Directorate

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Summary

- An archaeological watching brief took place during the groundworks for the construction of a single house on land adjacent to 12 Mill Lane, Caistor
- The brief identified no features of archaeological significance

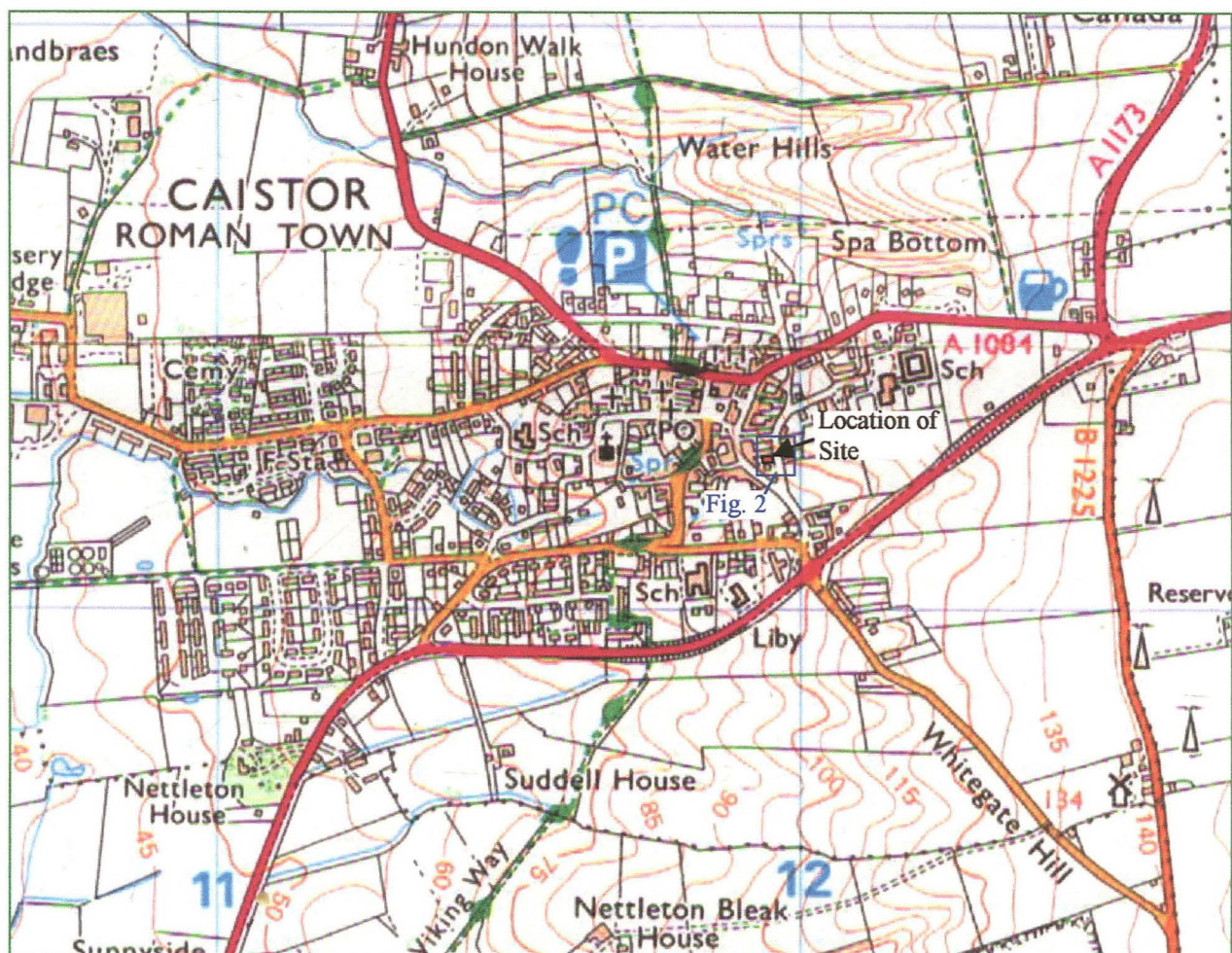


Fig. 1: Site location. The area highlighted in red is the development plot, the blue square is that seen in fig. 2. (Scale 1:12500; OS copyright ref AL 515 21 A0001)

1.0 Introduction

An archaeological watching brief took place during the excavation of cellar and foundation trenches for a single house on land adjacent to 12, Mill Lane in Caistor, Lincolnshire (National Grid Reference TF 1195 0125). The developer, Allison Cadle, commissioned this work to fulfil a condition attached to a planning permission (Ref. M03/P/0182).

This report documents the results of the archaeological watching brief that was undertaken in September 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, 1999).

Copies of this report will be deposited with the commissioning body, the Built Environment Officer for Lincolnshire County Council, the County Sites and Monuments Record, and West Lindsey District Council. 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 & 2)

Caistor lies within the administrative district of West Lindsey, approximately 12.5km north of Market Rasen, 17.5km south-east of Brigg. The development site is situated on the east side of the settlement (at National Grid Reference TF 1195 0125), east of The Ropewalk, less than 400m east-north-east of the parish church. It comprises a rectangular unit of approximately 240m², with the new building located on the eastern side.

The site occupies a level terrace that is situated between the 95m and 100m contours. It is bounded on its north side by a c. 2m brick wall and adjacent property; on its west and south sides by the garden of 12 Mill Lane, and is presently open to Mill Lane on its east side. The underlying geology of the area is characterised as Ferriby Chalk (BGS 1982).

Prior to development, the plot comprised part of the garden of 12 Mill Lane, being a level terrace approximately 1.5m above the terrace on which 12 Mill Lane itself is situated. The ground cover had been stripped in the area of the house footprint immediately prior to the commencement of the watching brief, thereby exposing topsoil.

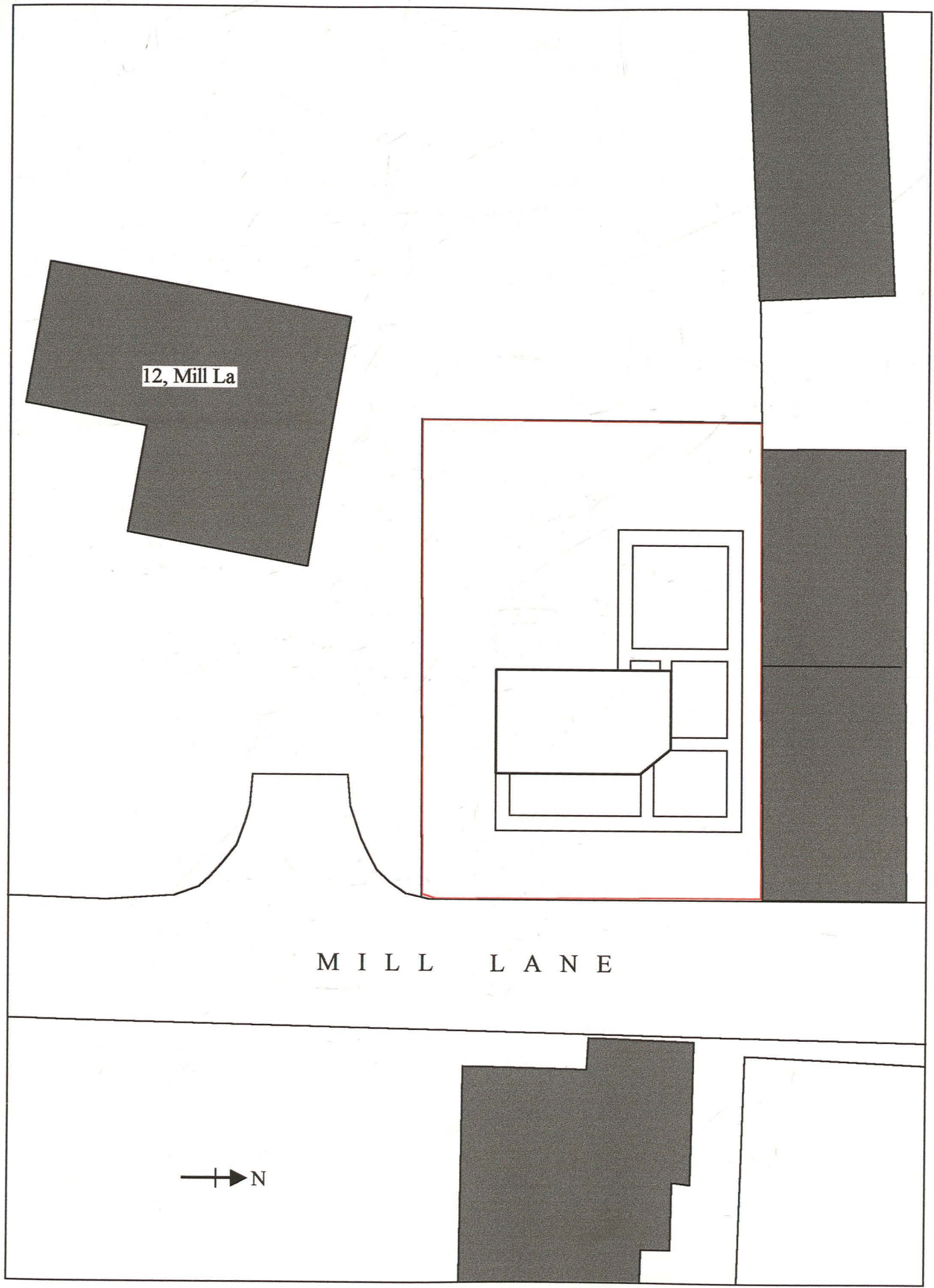


Fig.2: Location plan, showing the development plot (outlined in red). Scale 1:200

3.0 Planning Background

Full planning permission was granted for the construction of a single dwelling with cellar. The permission was granted subject to the undertaking of a watching brief on all groundworks.

The planning reference for this project is M03/P/0182

4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

The name of the town is derived from the Old English *cæster*, meaning 'a Roman station', itself from the Latin *castra*, 'military encampment or fort' (Cameron, 1998). The 'station' referred to was a Roman small town, whose position is now occupied by the village core. This settlement may have been the trade and administrative centre for the surrounding area, and was sufficiently important to have been defended by a substantial limestone wall, with external bastions (Whitwell, 1992). These defences enclosed an area of approximately 3 hectares, with the eastern wall lying c. 200m to the west of the proposed development area (*ibid*: fig. 6a).

Evidence of Romano-British activity has been identified in the local area. Two pottery kilns were discovered on Navigation Lane in the 1960s, examples of a local industry producing greyware vessels in the late 3rd to 4th centuries AD (SMR Nos. 50869 & 52684). A nearby hearth could also relate to Romano-British industrial activity, but no datable material was recovered (SMR No. 50876). A number of *tesserae* (mosaic tiles) have been discovered in fields to the west of the town (SMR No. 52641). This indicates the presence of a villa, but no other building material has yet been found.

Two early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries are known in the Caistor area: Hundon to the north and Nettleton to the south. A bronze bowl recovered from the Nettleton cemetery was decorated in a sub-Roman style, and is thought to date from the end of Roman rule in Britain (late 4th to early 5th century AD) (Whitwell, 1992). This may indicate that the small town of Caistor continued to be an important regional centre after the withdrawal of the Empire.

Caistor and its hinterland may have become a royal estate by the end of the 7th century AD, and it seems likely that an episcopal minster was founded at around this time (Sawyer, 1998); an inscribed stone found at Castle Hill in 1770 appears to refer to the dedication of a church in the 8th century (SMR No. 52681; Pevsner & Harris, 1989). A mint was established in the town in the last quarter of the 10th century, and coins were produced during the reigns of Edward the Martyr, Aethelred II and Cnut (died 1035).

Following the Norman Conquest, King William I retained the manor for himself, but in 1072 he granted the church at Caistor to Remigius, Bishop of Lincoln (Owen, 1971; Sawyer, 1998). In so doing he may have restored the system of ecclesiastical administration that had been superseded by the Danelaw during the Viking period. The Domesday Survey of 1086 indicates that Earl Morcar had held the estate before the Conquest (Morgan & Thorn, 1986): at the time, the holding amounted to land for 6 ploughs, 60 acres of meadow, and four mills, together valued at a very prosperous

£50. There is also a reference to "the Hall of this manor" (*ibid*: section 338c, 66), as well as the church and a priest 'claimed' by the Bishop of Lincoln. Elements of the 11th century structure may survive in the west end of the nave of the present church (Pevsner & Harris, 1989).

The development area is shown as open ground on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of Caistor (fig. 6). It is noteworthy that Mill Lane is named Race Lane on this map.

5.0 Methodology

The site was visited on 3.9.2003, when excavations for a cellar had already been completed. This work had been undertaken using a JCB excavator employing a 0.65m wide toothed bucket. Further visits were made on the 25th/26th September, when the foundation trenches for the remainder of the house were excavated. The trenches were excavated with a 1.5 ton mini-excavator employing a 0.5m wide bucket which resulted in trenches generally 0.7m wide and a maximum of 0.75m 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 exposed surfaces, followed by a thorough inspection. The deposits identified by this method were subjected to limited excavation to assess their nature/dimensions and to attempt to recover datable materials. These investigations resulted in the production of written descriptions of each deposit on standard watching brief context recording sheets. Colour photographs and scale drawings complement these accounts.

6.0 Results (Figs. 3, 4 & 5)

The modern topsoil, 001, consisted of a dark grey chalk-flecked silty sand containing occasional small flecks of brick/tile. The topsoil varied in thickness between 0.24m and 0.34m, and some 19th/20th century pottery was present, but discarded.

Below 001, was a mid orange brown sandy clay, which contained frequent chalk flecks, pea-gravel and occasional rounded pebbles - 002. This material was 0.04 – 0.15m in thickness and was interpreted as a contact layer on the surface of the underlying chalk, where some solution activity has occurred.

The underlying natural, 003, exposed at the base of all of the footings trenches, and into which the cellar was excavated to a depth of some 2.4m, consisted of chalk, the upper 0.4m of which was weathered. Below this horizon, the material lay in bedding planes, which at depth were up to 0.15m in thickness.

No cut features were seen in the exposed sections of the foundation trenches, and in the cellar, only a modern water pipe trench was exposed in the northeast corner.

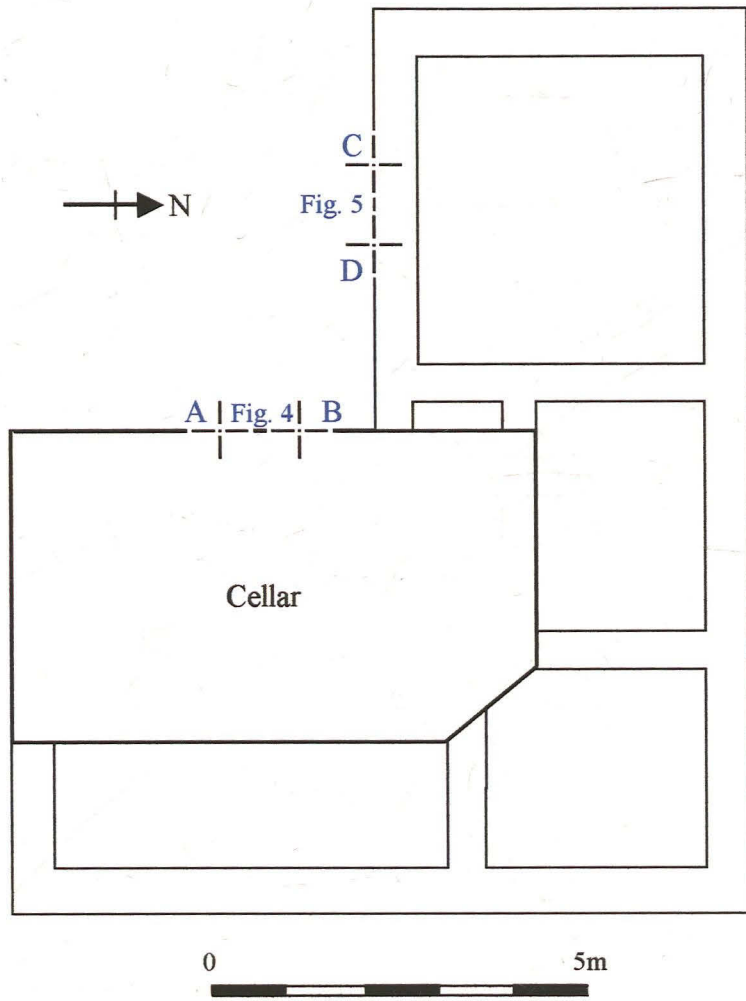


Fig. 3: Plan of the foundation trenches. Scale 1:100

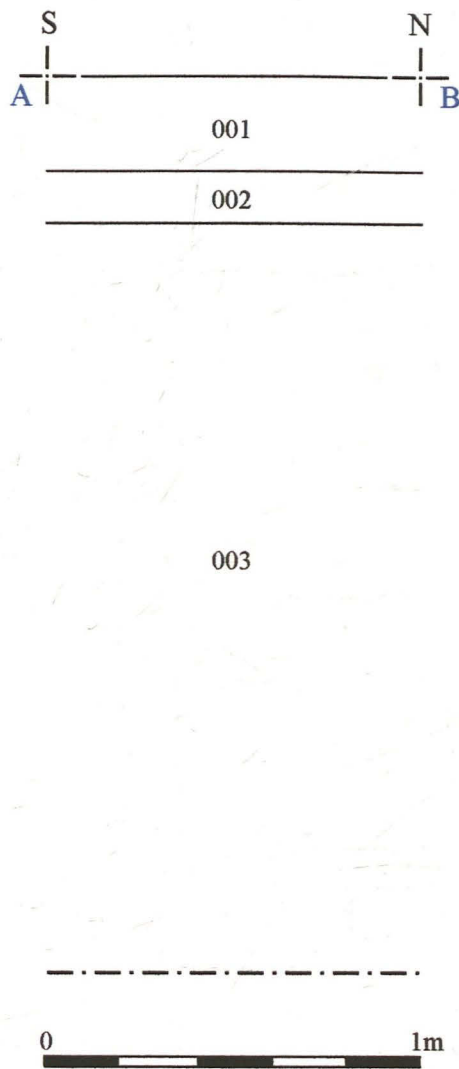


Fig. 4: East facing section through cellar. Scale 1:20

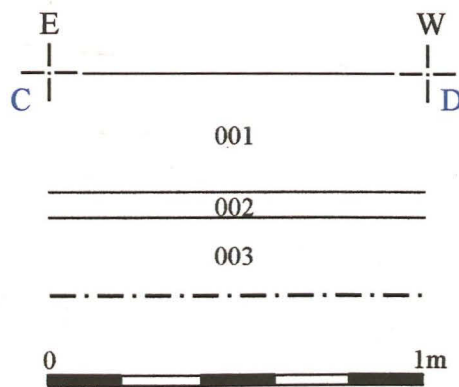


Fig. 5: North facing section through foundation trench. Scale 1:20

7.0 Discussion and Conclusions

No features of archaeological significance were exposed by the watching brief. It would appear, therefore, that this area of land, which is situated to the north east of the Roman settlement and in a gap between the present surrounding street-frontage properties, was never developed and has only been utilised in the past as pasture/garden.

8.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

The methodology employed was adequate to determine that no features of archaeological significance were present on the site.

9.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank Allison Cadle for this commission, and for the assistance provided by the groundworkers during the course of the watching brief.

10.0 Bibliography

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Appendix 1: Colour Plates



Plate 1(left):
General view of
the development
site, looking NW.



Plate 2(right):
General view of
the development
site, showing the
pit excavated for
the cellar, looking
east.



Plate 3(left):
General view of the
pit excavated for
the cellar, with the
foundations poured,
looking south.

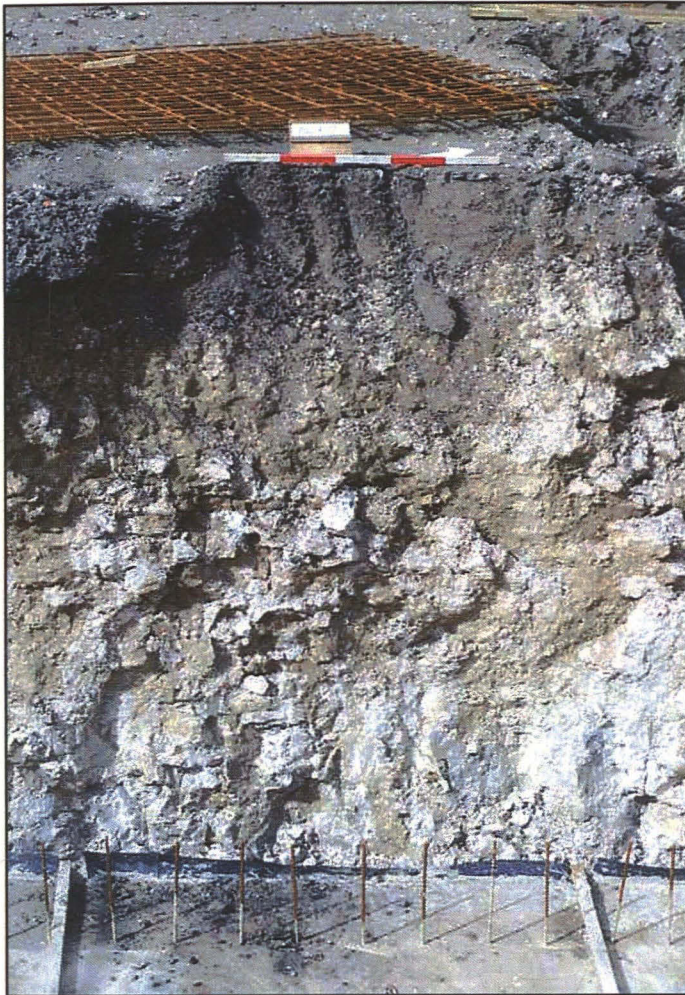


Plate 4(left):
Sample section of
the pit excavated
for the cellar,
looking west.



Plate 5(right):
General view of the
northern part of the
site with the
foundation trenches
excavated, looking
west.

Appendix 2: Context Summary

Context	Description
001	Modern Topsoil
002	Mid orange brown sandy clay contact layer/solution product, below 001.
003	Natural chalk, weathered at surface, bedded at depth.