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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
AT THE SMALLHOLDING,
ASPERTON ROAD, ASPERTON,
WIGTOFT,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(WAR 03)**



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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
AT THE SMALLHOLDING,
ASPERTON ROAD, ASPERTON,
WIGTOFT,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(WAR 03)**

**Work Undertaken For
Thorley Builders**

November 2003

Report Compiled by
Paul Cope-Faulkner BA (Hons) AIFA

National Grid Reference: TF 2600 3767
Planning Reference: B/03/0243/FULL
City and County Museum Accession No: 2003.350

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT SERVICES



APS Report No. 177/03



Quality Control
The Smallholding, Asperton Road,
Asperton, Wigtoft
WAR 03

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Supervisor	Vicky Mellor
Illustration	Paul Cope-Faulkner
Photographic Reproduction	Sue Unsworth
Post-excavation Analyst	Paul Cope-Faulkner

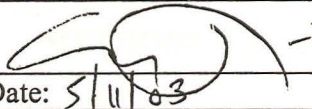
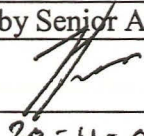
Checked by Project Manager	Approved by Senior Archaeologist
 Gary Taylor	 Tom Lane
Date: 5/11/03	Date: 20-11-03

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1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at The Smallholding, Asperton Road, Asperton, Wigtoft, Lincolnshire. The watching brief monitored the excavation of foundation trenches for a new combined garage, workshop and games block.

Asperton is now a hamlet to Wigtoft, although is first mentioned in the mid 11th century. Aerial photographs have revealed traces of the medieval (AD 1066-1540) field system around the hamlet.

The watching brief identified a sequence of natural and topsoil deposits with no archaeological features identified. No finds were observed or collected during the investigation.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Definition of a Watching Brief

An archaeological watching brief is defined as "a formal program of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits maybe disturbed or destroyed." (IFA 1999).

2.2 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Thorley Builders to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with a new combined garage, workshop and games block on land at The Smallholding, Asperton Road, Asperton, Wigtoft, Lincolnshire. Approval for the development was sought through the submission of planning application B/03/0243/FULL. The watching brief was carried out on the 17th October 2003, in

accordance with a specification prepared by Archaeological Project Services (Appendix 1) and approved by the Boston Community Archaeologist.

2.3 Topography and Geology

Wigtoft is located 10km southwest of Boston and 13km north of Spalding among the fens of south Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The site is 1.4km north of Wigtoft village centre as defined by the church of SS. Peter and Paul in the hamlet of Asperton (Fig. 2). Located on the west side of Asperton Road, the site is centred on National Grid Reference TF 2600 3767. The site lies on generally level ground at a height of 3m OD.

Local soils are of the Wallasea and Pepperthorne Series, typically pelo-alluvial gley or alluvial gley soils (Robson 1990, 23, 34). These soils are developed on a drift geology of younger marine alluvium which in turn overlies a solid geology of Jurassic Amptill clays (BGS 1995).

2.4 Archaeological Setting

Asperton is first mentioned in a charter dating to 1060. Referred to as *Osfyryhtunæ* the name is derived from Old English and means the settlement (tūn) belonging to *Ōsfrith* (Cameron 1998, 5). There is no mention of either Asperton or Wigtoft in the Domesday Survey of c. 1086, although Burtoft, a hamlet south of Wigtoft, is recorded as belonging to Crowland Abbey (Foster and Longley 1976).

The extent of the medieval village of Asperton is unclear, although traces of the medieval field system have been recorded as soil marks on aerial photographs in close proximity to the site.

3. AIMS

The requirements of the watching brief, as detailed in the specification (Appendix 1), were to locate and record archaeological deposits and, if present, determine their nature, function, origin and date.

4. METHODS

Prior to the excavation of foundation trenches topsoil was partly stripped from the area. Foundation trenches were then dug by machine to depths required by the development. The sides of the trenches were then cleaned and rendered vertical. Each deposit encountered was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and their interpretations appears as Appendix 2. A photographic record was compiled and a section drawn at a scale of 1:10. Recording was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services' practice.

Following excavation, the records were checked and a stratigraphic matrix produced.

5. RESULTS

Contexts are listed below and described. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

The earliest deposit encountered was a layer of mottled greyish and yellowish brown silty sand and silty clay (002). This was over 0.54m thick and was identified as the underlying marine alluvium.

Sealing the natural deposits was a 0.33m thick topsoil comprising greyish brown sand and silt (001).

6. DISCUSSION

Natural silty sands and silty clays are associated with the underlying drift geology of younger marine alluvium. This was sealed by a recent topsoil. No archaeological features or deposits were encountered and no artefacts collected.

7. CONCLUSION

Archaeological investigations were undertaken at Asperon, Wigtoft, as the site lay in close proximity to a deserted medieval settlement.

However, no medieval remains were encountered and only a sequence of natural and topsoil deposits were encountered. No artefacts were retrieved.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wish to acknowledge the assistance of Mr R. Thorley of Thorley Builders for commissioning the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Dale Trimble and this report was edited by Gary Taylor and Tom Lane. Background information was kindly provided by the Boston Community Archaeologist.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Dale Trimble
 Site Supervisor: Vicky Mellor
 Photographic reproduction: Sue Unsworth
 Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner
 Post-excavation analysis: Paul Cope-Faulkner

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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11. ABBREVIATIONS

BGS British Geological Survey

IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

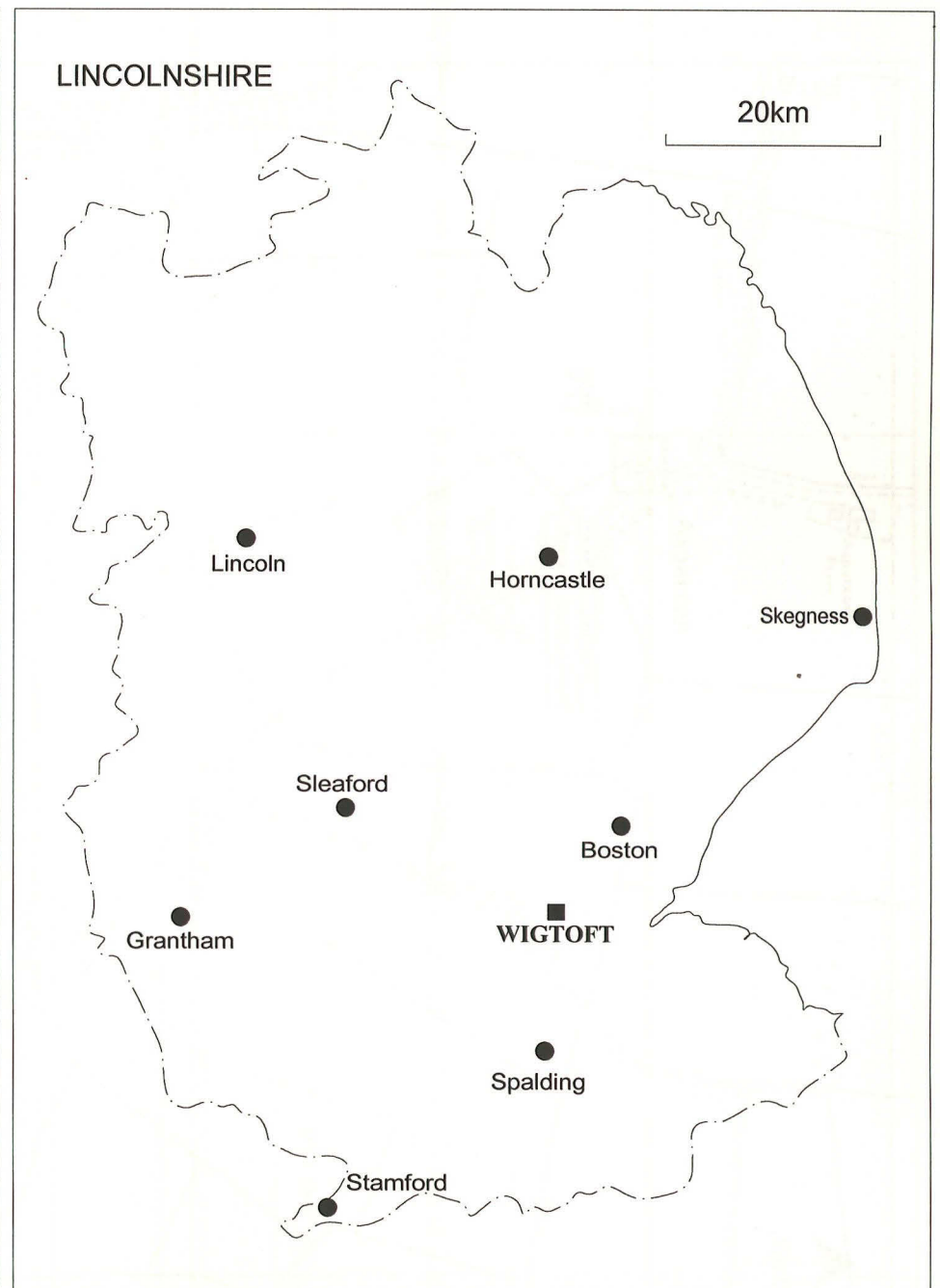
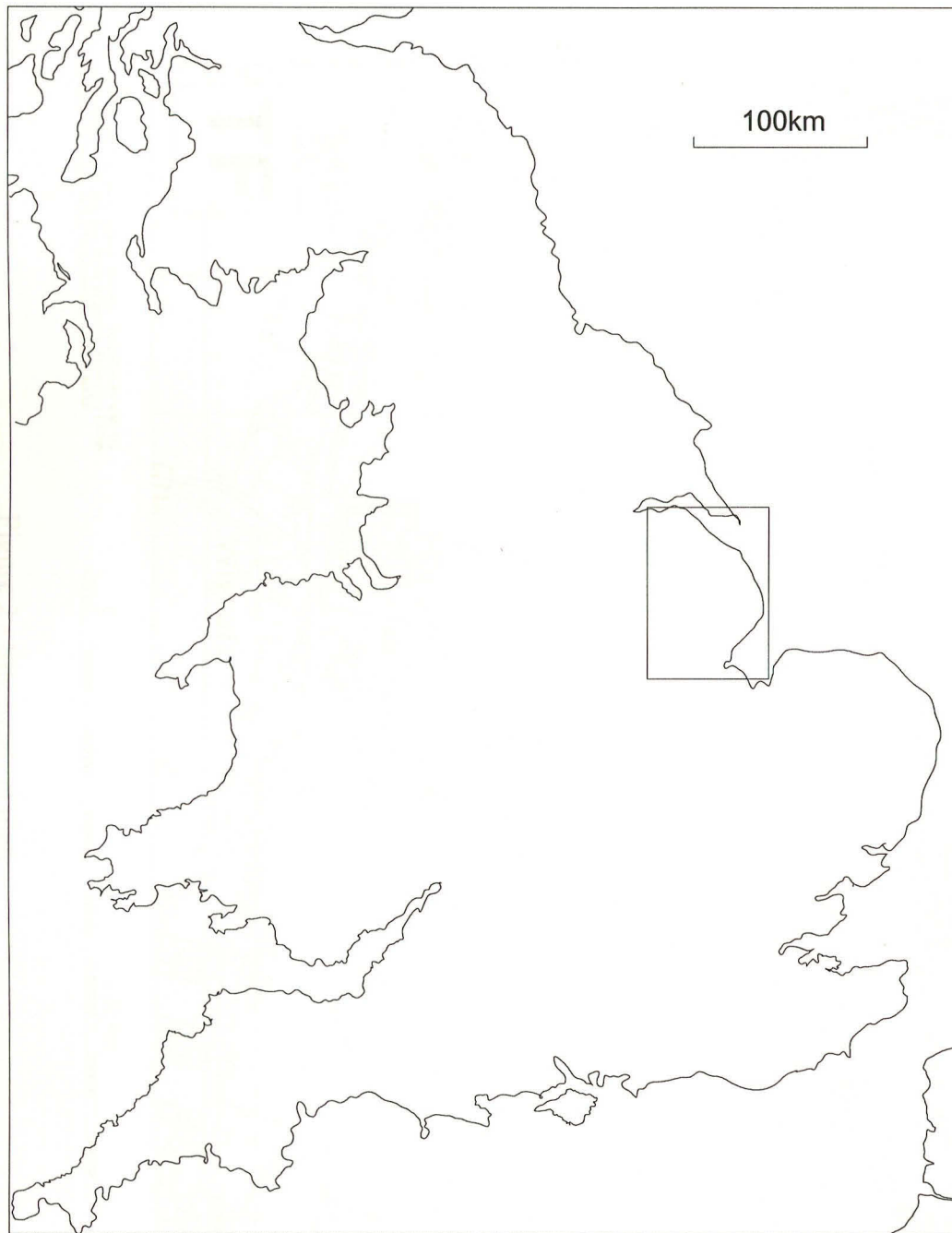
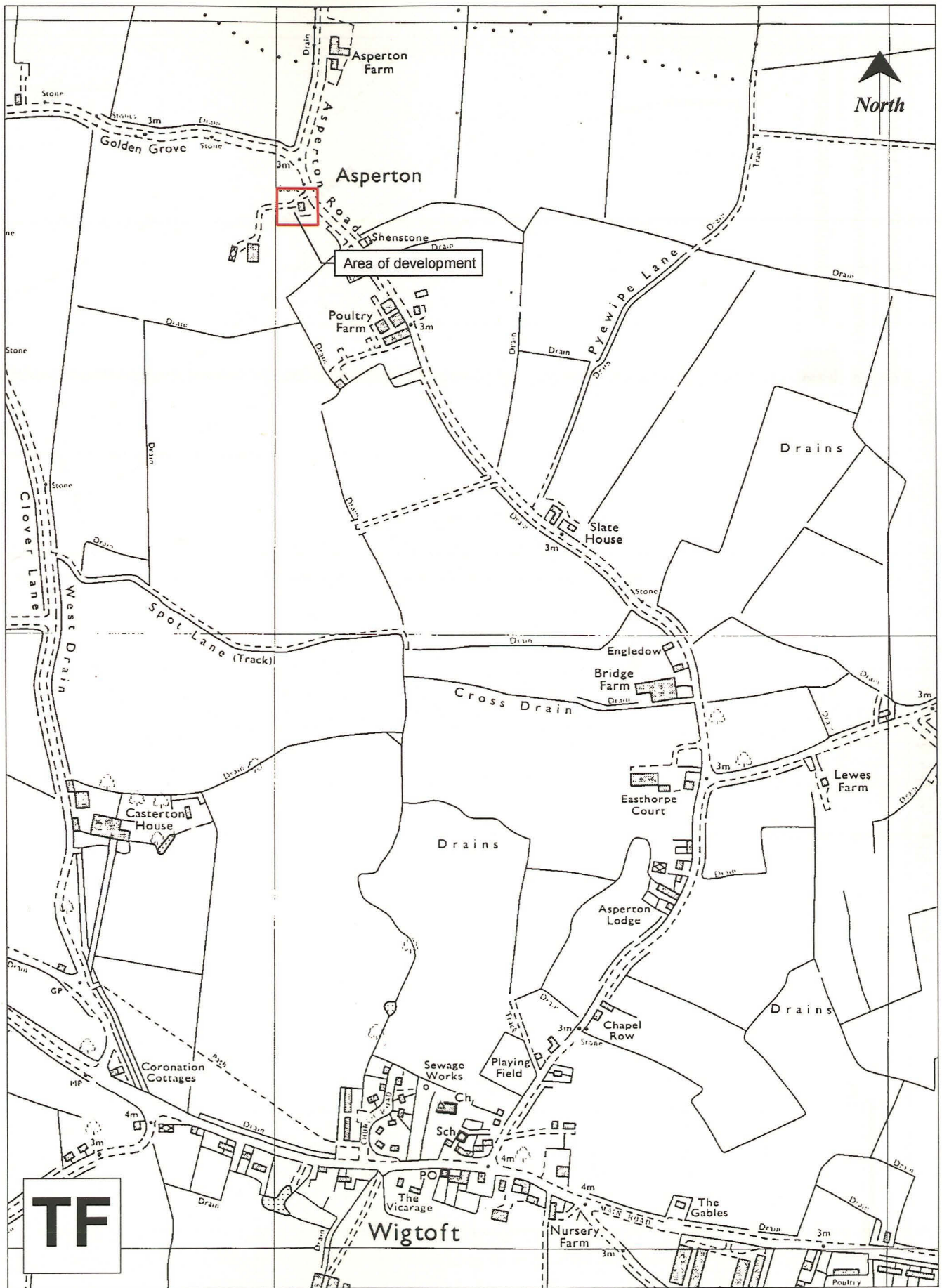


Figure 1 - General Location Plan



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Figure 2 - Site location plan

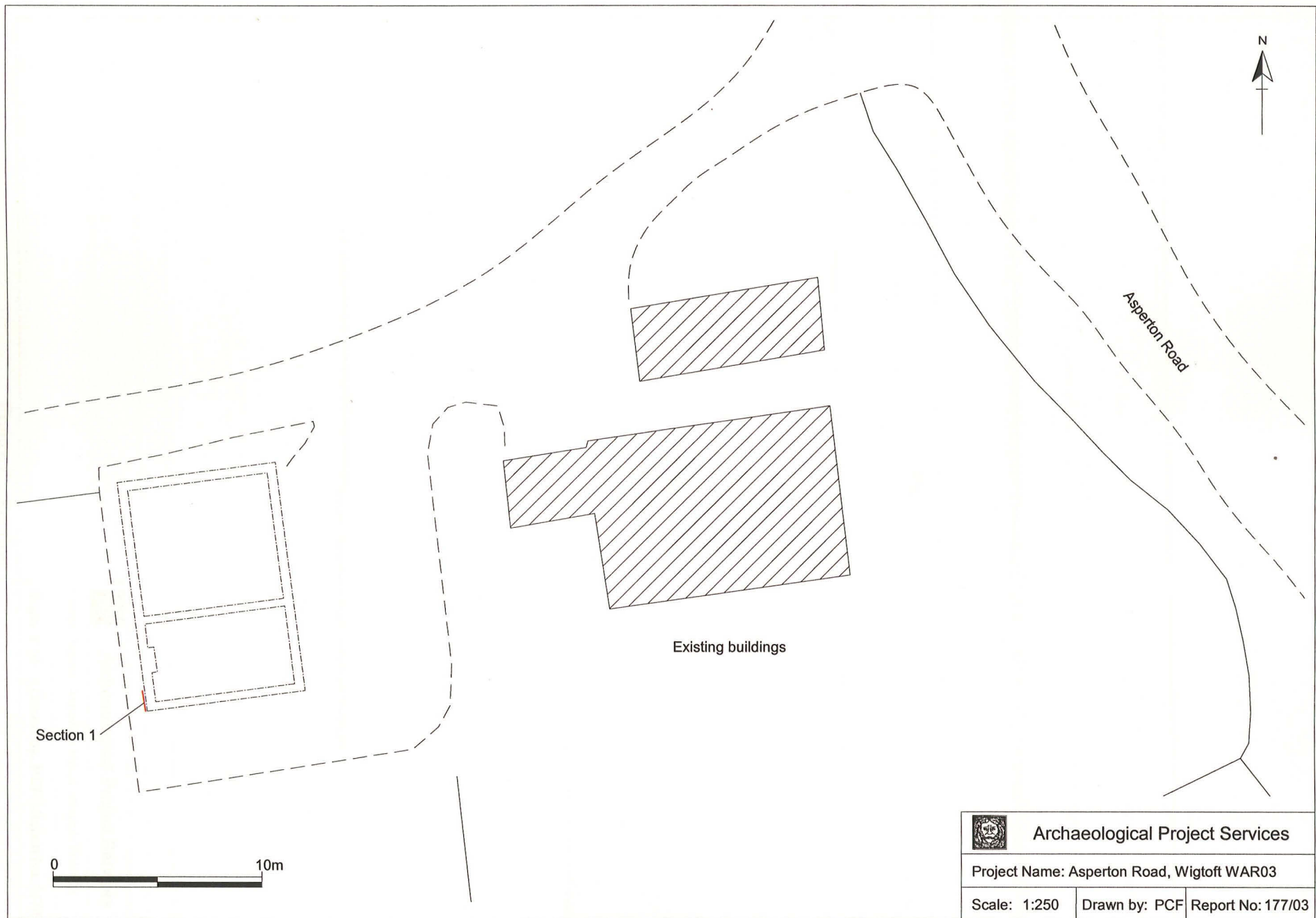
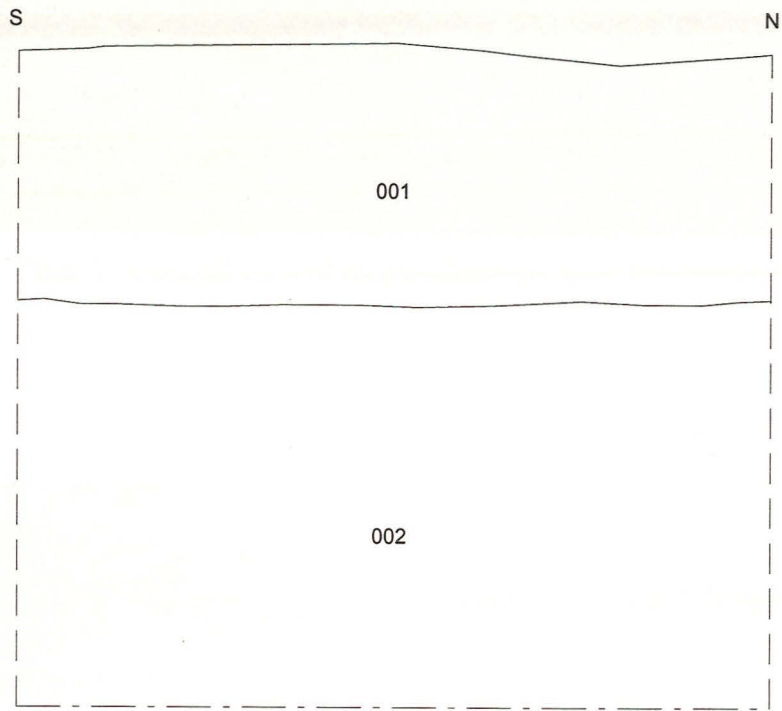


Figure 3 - Plan of the development showing section location



Section 1



Archaeological Project Services

Project Name: Asperton Road, Wigtoft WAR03

Scale 1:10

Drawn by: PCF

Report No: 177/03

Figure 4 - Section 1



Plate 1 - General view of the development area, looking east

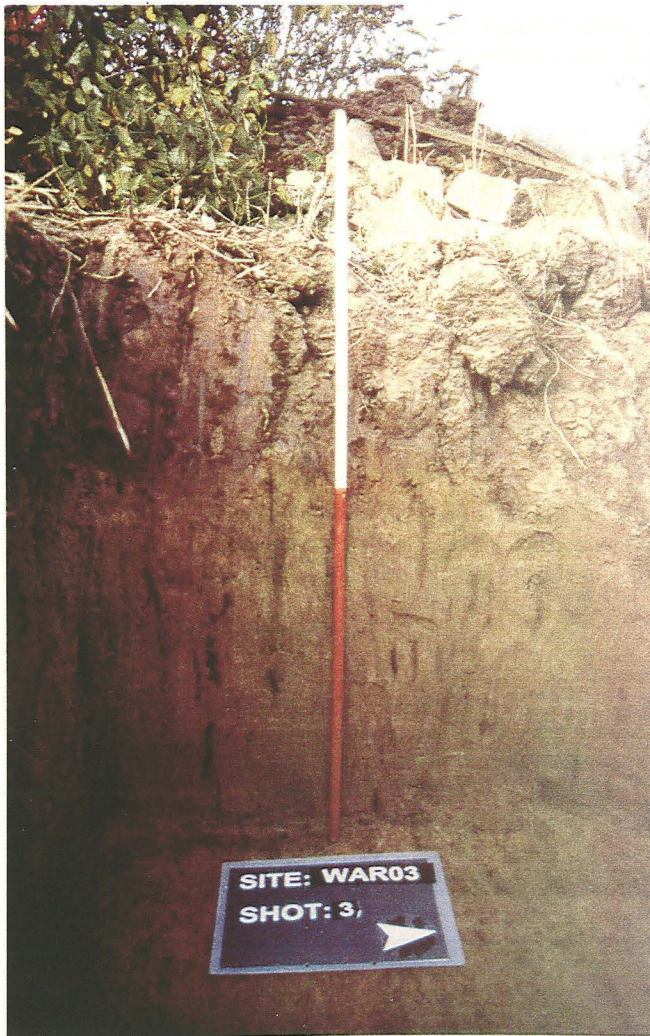


Plate 2 - Section 1, looking west

Appendix 1

LAND AT THE SMALL HOLDING, ASPERTON, ASPERTON ROAD, WIGTOFT, LINCOLNSHIRE - SPECIFICATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 *An archaeological watching brief is required during groundworks associated with the construction of a building on land off Asperton Road, Wigtoft, Lincolnshire.*
- 1.2 *The site lies in an area of archaeological potential, close to an area where aerial photographs show remains of a possible medieval field system and evidence from the place-name suggests the settlement may have Middle Saxon origins.*
- 1.3 *The archaeological monitoring will be undertaken during groundworks associated with the development. The archaeological features exposed will be recorded in writing, graphically and photographically.*
- 1.4 *On completion of the fieldwork, a report will be prepared detailing the results of the archaeological works. The report will consist of a narrative supported by illustrations and photographs.*

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This document comprises a specification for an archaeological watching brief during construction at The Small Holding, Asperton Road, Wigtoft, Lincolnshire centred on National Grid Reference TF 2600 3767.
- 2.2 This document contains the following parts:
 - 2.2.1 Overview.
 - 2.2.2 Stages of work and methodologies.
 - 2.2.3 List of specialists.
 - 2.2.4 Programme of works and staffing structure of the project

3 SITE LOCATION

- 3.1 Wigtoft is situated 10km southwest of Boston and 13km north of Spalding in the fens of South Lincolnshire. The site itself is located in Asperton, approximately 1.6km north of Wigtoft village at The Small Holding, on the west side of Asperton Road at National Grid Reference TF 2600 3767.

4 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 4.1 A planning application, B/03/0243/FULL, has been submitted to Boston Borough Council for the construction of a detached building for use as a garage, workshop and games room. As part of the condition of planning, an archaeological watching brief is required during groundworks associated with the development.

5 SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 5.1 The site lies within a small settlement known as Asperton, approximately 1.6km north of Wigtoft. The proposed structure will be located to the west of the two buildings currently occupying the plot, which lie adjacent to Asperton road to the east. The land lies on level ground at approximately 3m OD, within

soils of the Wisbech Association, mainly coarse silty calcareous soils developed on marine alluvium (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 361).

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

- 6.1 Asperton and Wigtoft are situated in an area of known archaeological presence dating from the Saxon period. Since at least 2000 BC the area has been subjected to a series of marine and freshwater inundations resulting in the deposition of several metres of alluvium (silts and clays). Consequently, any prehistoric material is believed to lie at a significant depth.
- 6.2 The Fens were extensively occupied during the Romano-British period (AD50-410), although no material of this date has yet been found in the neighbourhood of Wigtoft.
- 6.3 Records held at Heritage Lincolnshire contain references to a Jelling style lead alloy disc brooch of the Viking period, found around 1km to the south of the proposed development.
- 6.4 Asperton is thought to be mentioned in a pre-conquest charter, possibly suggesting Middle Saxon origins for the settlement.
- 6.5 Soil marks thought to represent the remains of a medieval field system have been identified in close proximity to the site on aerial photographs.
- 6.6 Saxon occupation of the area is represented by pottery found at two locations near Wigtoft. The first, located 1km northeast of the site, produced Late Saxon Stamford Ware and is associated with an area of raised ground, possibly the site of a settlement (B20/008). The second area, in the region of the hamlet of Burtoft, has produced pottery of mid to late Saxon date (B20/009).
- 6.7 Wigtoft is first mentioned in a charter dated to 1316. Referred to as 'Wiketoft' the name is derived from the Old Scandinavian meaning house by the vik, meaning bay or creek (Ekwall 1974, 518). There is no mention of Wigtoft in the Domesday Survey of 1086, although Burtoft is recorded as belonging to Crowland Abbey (Foster and Longley 1976). However, the amount of land held by Crowland is insufficient to include Wigtoft.
- 6.8 Medieval settlement in the area is best represented by the extant remains of SS. Peter and Paul's church. The base of the tower and elements of the nave wall are Norman (11th -12th century) in style, with later alterations dating to the 13th century (Pevsner and Harris 1989, 798). Medieval pottery is also known from Burtoft (B20/010) and a small settlement associated with Casterton House, 800m to the northwest (B20/001 and 003).

7 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 7.1 The aims of the archaeological monitoring will be:
 - 7.1.1 To record and interpret the archaeological features exposed during the excavation of the foundation trenches and other areas of ground disturbance.
- 7.2 The objectives will be to:
 - 7.2.1 Determine the form and function of the archaeological features encountered;
 - 7.2.2 Determine the spatial arrangement of the archaeological features encountered;
 - 7.2.3 As far as practicable, recover dating evidence from the archaeological features, and
 - 7.2.4 Establish the sequence of the archaeological remains present on the site.

8 SITE OPERATIONS

8.1 General considerations

- 8.1.1 All work will be undertaken following statutory Health and Safety requirements in operation at the time of the archaeological works.
- 8.1.2 The work will be undertaken according to the relevant codes of practise issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), under the management of a Member of the institute (MIFA). Archaeological Project Services is IFA registered organisation no. 21.
- 8.1.3 Any and all artefacts found during the investigation and thought to be 'treasure', as defined by the Treasure Act 1996, will be removed from site to a secure store and promptly reported to the appropriate coroner's office.

8.2 Methodology

- 8.2.1 The scheme of works will be undertaken during the ground works and includes the archaeological monitoring of all phases of soil movement.
- 8.2.2 If archaeological remains are revealed adequate time will be made to allow archaeologists to fully investigate and record the archaeological deposits encountered. This may require pauses in groundwork.
- 8.2.3 Any finds recovered will be bagged and labelled for later analysis.
- 8.2.4 Throughout the archaeological works, a photographic record will be compiled. The photographic record will consist of:
 - the site during work to show specific stages, and the layout of the archaeology within the trench.
 - groups of features where their relationship is important
- 8.2.5 Should human remains be located the appropriate Home Office licence will be obtained before their removal. In addition, the Local Environmental Health Department and the police will be informed.

9 POST EXCAVATION

9.1 Stage 1

- 9.1.1 On completion of site operations, the records and schedules produced during the archaeological works will be checked and ordered to ensure that they form a uniform sequence forming a level II archive. A stratigraphic matrix of the archaeological deposits and features present on the site will be prepared. All photographic material will be catalogued and labelled, the labelling referring to schedules identifying the subject/s photographed.
- 9.1.2 All finds recovered during the fieldwork will be washed, marked and packaged according to the deposit from which they were recovered. Any finds requiring specialist treatment and conservation will be sent to the Conservation Laboratory at the City and County Museum, Lincoln.

9.2 Stage 2

- 9.2.1 Detailed examination of the stratigraphic matrix to enable the determination of the various phases of activity on the site.

9.2.2 Finds will be sent to specialists for identification and dating.

9.3 Stage 3

9.3.1 On completion of stage 2, a report detailing the findings of the archaeological works will be prepared.

9.3.2 This will consist of:

- A non-technical summary of the results of the investigation.
- A description of the archaeological setting of the works.
- Description of the topography of the site.
- Description of the methodologies used during the archaeological works.
- A text describing the findings of the archaeological works.
- A consideration of the local, regional and national context of the archaeological works findings.
- Plans of the archaeological features exposed. If a sequence of archaeological deposits is encountered, separate plans for each phase will be produced.
- Sections of the archaeological features.
- Interpretation of the archaeological features exposed, and their chronology and setting within the surrounding landscape.
- Specialist reports on the finds from the site.
- Appropriate photographs of the site and specific archaeological features.

10 REPORT DEPOSITION

10.1 Copies of the report will be sent to the Client; the Boston Borough Council Community Archaeologist; Boston Borough Council Planning Department; and to the County Council Archaeological Sites and Monuments Record.

11 ARCHIVE

11.1 The documentation and records generated during the archaeological works will be sorted and ordered into the format acceptable to the City and County Museum, Lincoln. This will be undertaken following the requirements of the document titled Conditions for the Acceptance of Project Archives for long-term storage and curation.

12 PUBLICATION

12.1 A report of the findings of the archaeological works will be presented as a condensed article to the editor of the journal Lincolnshire History and Archaeology. If appropriate, notes on the findings will be submitted to the appropriate national journals: Britannia for discoveries of Roman date, and Medieval Archaeology and the Journal of the Medieval Settlement Research Group for findings of medieval or later date.

13 CURATORIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- 13.1 Curatorial responsibility for the archaeological work undertaken on the site lies with the Boston Borough Council Community Archaeologist. They will be given seven days notice in writing before the commencement of the project.

14 PROGRAMME OF WORKS AND STAFFING LEVELS

- 14.1 The archaeological works will be integrated with the programme of construction and is dependent on the developers' work programme. It is therefore not possible to specify the person-hours for the archaeological site work.
- 14.2 An archaeological supervisor with appropriate experience will undertake the work.
- 14.3 Post-excavation analysis and report production will be undertaken by the archaeological supervisor, or a post-excavation analyst as appropriate, with assistance from a finds supervisor, illustrator and external specialists. It is expected that each fieldwork day (equal to one person-day) will require a post-excavation day (equal to one-and-a-half-person-days) for completion of the analysis and report. If the fieldwork lasts longer than about four days then there will be an economy of scale with the post-excavation analysis.

15 VARIATION AND CONTINGENCIES

- 15.1 Variations to the proposed scheme of works will only be made following written confirmation of acceptance from the archaeological curator.
- 15.2 In the event of the discovery of any unexpected remains of archaeological importance, or of any changed circumstances, it is the responsibility of the archaeological contractor to inform the archaeological curator (Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook 1998, Sections 5.7 and 18).
- 15.3 Where important archaeological remains are discovered and deemed to merit further investigation additional resources may be required to provide an appropriate level of investigation, recording and analysis
- 15.4 Any contingency requirement for additional fieldwork or post-excavation analysis outside the scope of the proposed scheme of works will only be activated following full consultation with the archaeological curator and the client.

16 SPECIALISTS TO BE USED DURING THE PROJECT

- 16.1 The following organisations/persons will, in principle and if necessary, be used as subcontractors to provide the relevant specialist work and reports in respect of any objects or material recovered during the investigation that require their expert knowledge and input. Engagement of any particular specialist subcontractor is also dependent on their availability and ability to meet programming requirements.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Body to be undertaking the work</u>
Conservation	Conservation Laboratory, City and County Museum, Lincoln
Pottery Analysis	Prehistoric - Trent & Peak Archaeological Trust
Roman	B Precious, Independent Specialist
Anglo-Saxon	J Young, Independent Specialist

Medieval and later	G Taylor, APS in consultation with H Healey, Independent Archaeologist
Non-pottery Artefacts	J Cowgill, Independent Specialist
Animal Bones	Environmental Archaeology Consultancy
Environmental Analysis	J Rackham, Independent Specialist
Human Remains Analysis	R Gowland, Independent Specialist

17 INSURANCES

- 17.1 Archaeological Project Services, as part of the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire, maintains Employers Liability Insurance of £10,000,000, together with Public and Products Liability insurances, each with indemnity of £5,000,000. Copies of insurance documentation can be supplied on request.

18 COPYRIGHT

- 18.1 Archaeological Project Services shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project Specification.
- 18.2 Licence will also be given to the archaeological curators to use the documentary archive for educational, public and research purposes.
- 18.3 In the case of non-satisfactory settlement of account then copyright will remain fully and exclusively with Archaeological Project Services. In these circumstances, it will be an infringement under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 for the client to pass any report, partial report, or copy of same, to any third party. Reports submitted in good faith by Archaeological Project Services to any Planning Authority or archaeological curator will be removed from said planning Authority and/or archaeological curator. The Planning Authority and/or archaeological curator will be notified by Archaeological Project Services that the use of any such information previously supplied constitutes an infringement under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 and may result in legal action.
- 18.4 The author of any report or specialist contribution to a report shall retain intellectual copyright of their work and may make use of their work for educational or research purposes or for further publication.

19 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Specification: Version 1, 13th October 2003

Appendix 2

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Description	Interpretation
001	Firm dark greyish brown sand and silt, 0.33m thick	Topsoil
002	Soft to firm light mottled greyish and yellowish brown silty sand to silty clay, >0.54m thick	Natural deposit

Appendix 3

GLOSSARY

Context	An archaeological context represents a distinct archaeological event or process. For example, the action of digging a pit creates a context (the cut) as does the process of its subsequent backfill (the fill). Each context encountered during an archaeological investigation is allocated a unique number by the archaeologist and a record sheet detailing the description and interpretations of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, <i>e.g.</i> (004).
Cropmark	A mark that is produced by the effect of underlying archaeological features influencing the growth of a particular crop.
Layer	A layer is a term to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
Medieval	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
Natural	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity.
Saxon	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 410-1066 when England was largely settled by tribes from northern Germany.

Appendix 4

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

2	Context records
1	Sheets of scale drawing
1	Photographic record sheet
1	Stratigraphic matrix

All primary records are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services
The Old School
Cameron Street
Heckington
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 9RW

The ultimate destination of the project archive is:

Lincolnshire City and County Museum
12 Friars Lane
Lincoln
LN2 1HQ

The archive will be deposited in accordance with the document titled *Conditions for the Acceptance of Project Archives*, produced by the Lincolnshire City and County Museum.

Lincolnshire City and County Council Museum Accession Number: 2003.350

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: WAR 03

The discussion and comments provided in this report are based on the archaeology revealed during the site investigations. Other archaeological finds and features may exist on the development site but away from the areas exposed during the course of this fieldwork. *Archaeological Project Services* cannot confirm that those areas unexposed are free from archaeology nor that any archaeology present there is of a similar character to that revealed during the current investigation.

Archaeological Project Services shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project Specification.