

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF,
GREESTONE PLACE TO BISHOP'S PALACE,
LINCOLN**

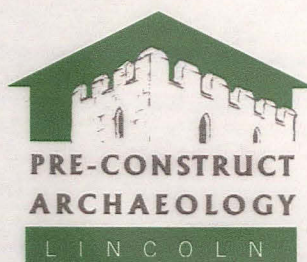
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Report prepared for British Telecommunications plc,

by

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Summary

- *An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the laying of a telephone cable from Greestone Place to the Bishop's Palace, Lincoln.*
- *The groundworks took place in an extremely archaeologically sensitive area; in the region of the Roman legionary fortress, and in the core of the medieval city, close to the Cathedral and the Bishop's Palace.*
- *For the most part, the excavations exposed no significant archaeological deposits, although a cobbled surface of probable Victorian date was exposed in Minster Yard.*

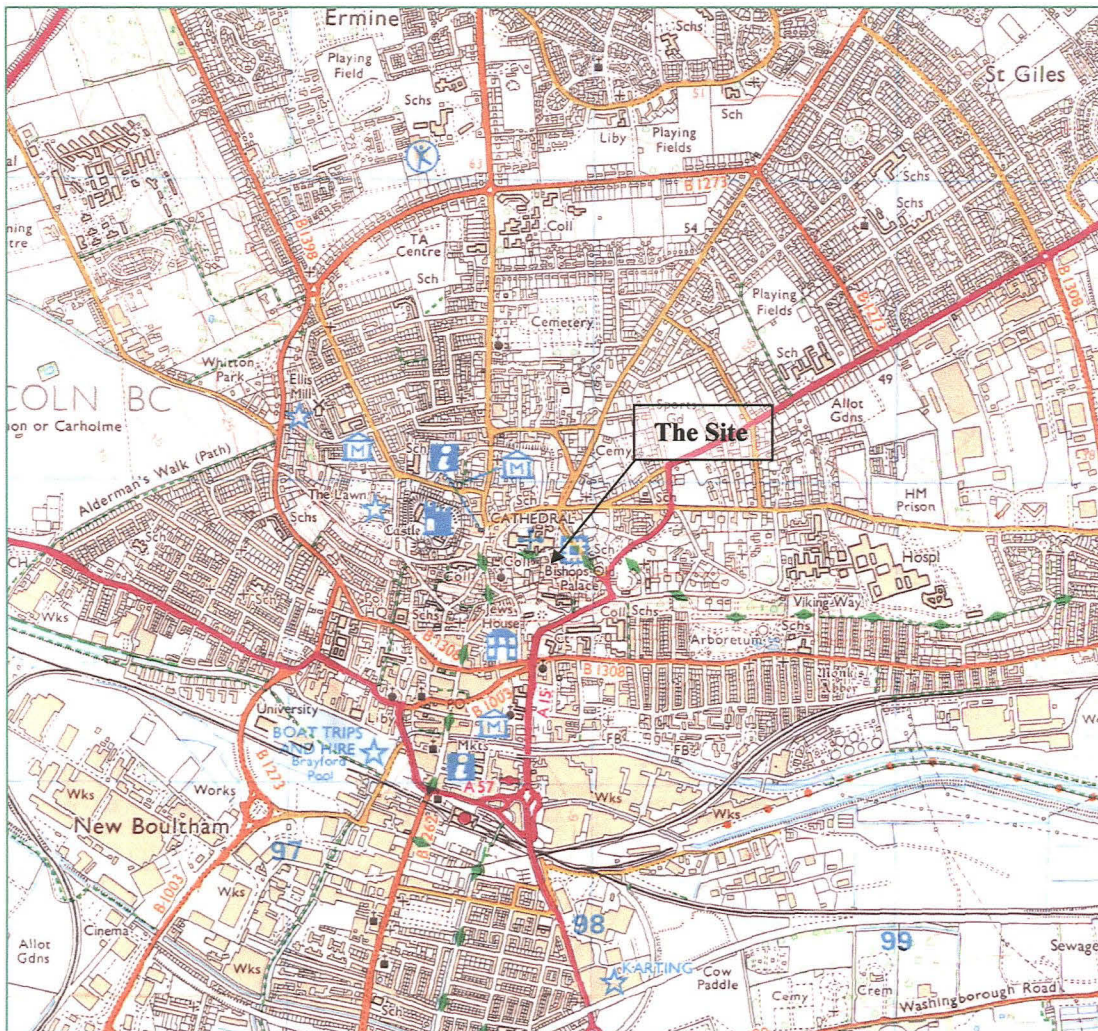


Fig.1: General site location (scale 1:25,000)
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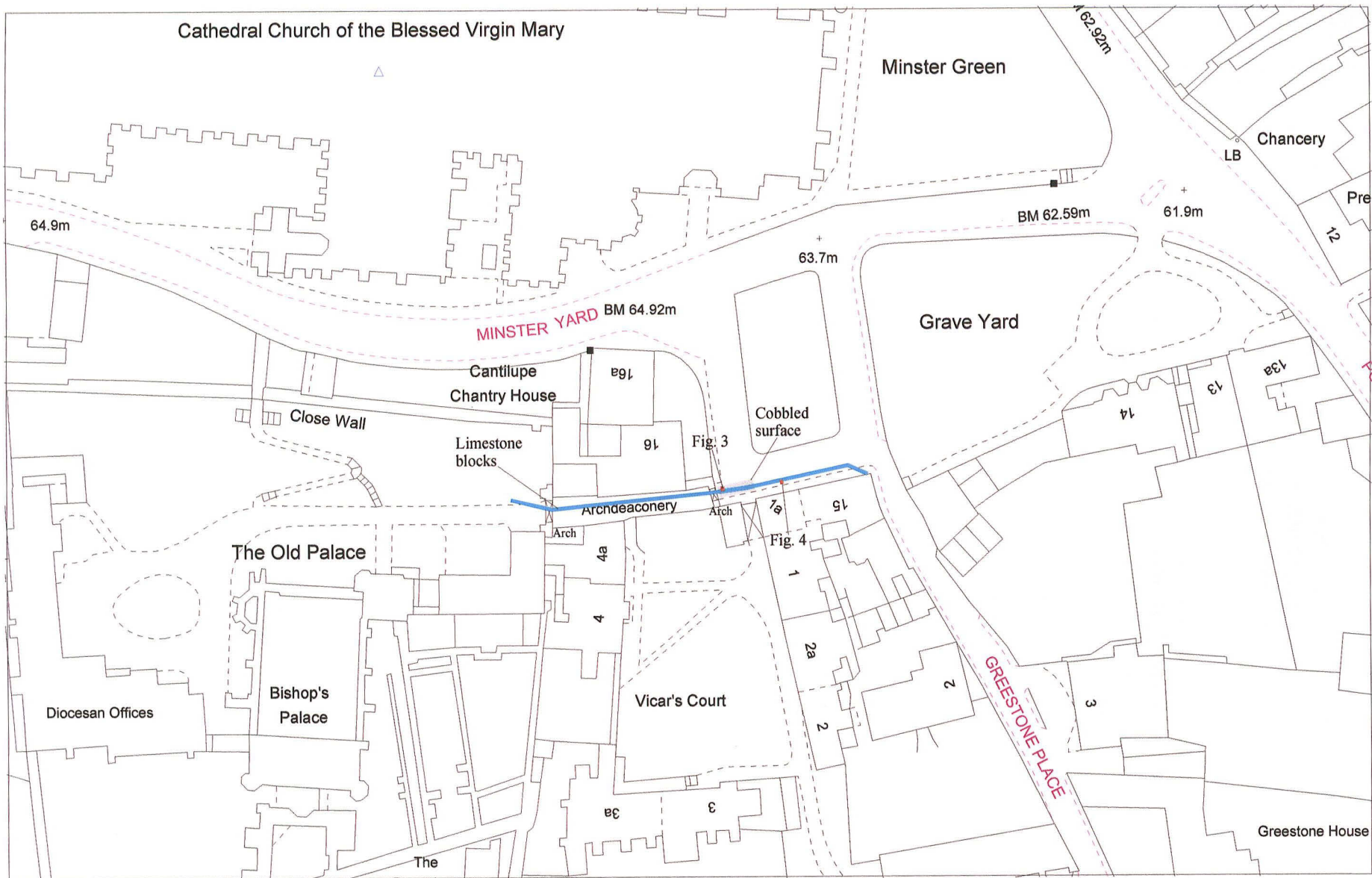


Fig. 2: Location of monitored works shown in blue, with drawn sections indicated in red (scale 1:1000)

1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) was commissioned by British Telecommunications plc to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the laying of a new telephone cable between Greestone Place and Bishop's Palace, Lincoln.

The programme of monitoring and reporting was designed to conform to 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 excavation* (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

The groundworks were carried out in the historic core of the city of Lincoln, to the south of the Norman Cathedral. The cable trench ran from Greestone Place, westwards into the grounds of the Bishop's Palace, a total length of approximately 32m (central NGR SK 9743 7137). The cable trench ran in the road, close to the pavement and adjacent to properties fronting Minster Yard, passing through an archway, past the Archdeaconry, and through a second archway into the grounds of the Bishop's Palace.

The underlying solid geology in this area consists of Lincolnshire Limestone (British Geological Survey, 1973).

3.0 Planning background

The groundworks carried out during this phase of work fall outside the normal planning process, and as such, a planning application was not required. However, acting on the advice of English Heritage and Lincoln City Council, and given the historical and archaeological sensitivity of the area, it was deemed necessary to carry out an archaeological watching brief on all groundworks likely to disturb or destroy sensitive archaeological deposits (to effectively preserve the archaeological resource 'by record').

4.0 Archaeological and historical background

Although not in the immediate vicinity of the current site, the earliest settlement activity in Lincoln dates to the later Iron Age, and suggests a possibly extensive settlement; remains having been identified near the Brayford Pool, and at the Lawn, (the latter c.500m west of the current site) (Jones, 2002).

Following the Roman invasion of Britain, a legionary fortress was established at Lincoln in the second half of the 1st century AD (*ibid.*). By the end of the century, this had developed into a civilian settlement, gaining the status of *colonia*, a regional capital established for the benefit of retired legionaries, and for the administration and control of the native community. The current site lies just outside the south-eastern corner of the legionary fortress, the buildings of which were reused in a civilian capacity. The population of the town rapidly expanded beyond the defences of the legionary fortress, spreading further downhill, this area also being walled by the later 3rd century (Todd, 1991).

There appears to have been some degree of abandonment and dereliction in Lincoln following the Roman departure from Britain in the 5th century, although documentary evidence suggests some degree of continuity of occupation (*ibid.*). The arrival of Danish settlers in the 9th and 10th centuries initiated a phase of regrowth in the city, largely in the lower town.

The upper town was extensively redeveloped following the Norman Conquest, with large amounts of housing being cleared for the construction of the castle and the cathedral at the end of the 11th century (Jones, 1993). The Bishop's Palace, at the west end of the monitored area was begun soon after, following a charter from Henry II granting land for the Bishop to build a private residence. This was developed and extended over the succeeding centuries, until it began to fall into decline in the early 16th century, a process accelerated by the Civil War, when a parliamentary garrison was overrun by a Royalist force, who subsequently burnt the palace (Ambrose, 1980).

This expansion continued throughout the medieval period, the wealth of the city being largely based on the export of wool. However, in the late 14th century, the combined effects of the Black Death, the transference of the wool staple to Boston, the expansion of the Flemish cloth trade and excessive taxation to pay for the Hundred Years War caused a long period of decline in Lincoln (Jones 1993, Hill, 1965). Revival only began in the 17th century, a process accelerated by the arrival of the railway in 1846, accompanied by heavy industry in the 19th and 20th centuries (Kemp, 1993).

5.0 Methodology

The concrete road surface was initially cut with a circular saw along the edges of the cable trench. Subsequent groundworks were carried out using a tracked mini digger fitted with a 0.3m wide toothless bucket. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of c.0.6m.

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 1:10. 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 groundworks were carried out on Saturday September 7th 2003 and were monitored at all times by Mark Allen.

6.0 Results

The uppermost layer removed was the modern road surface, 001, which varied between 0.05 and 0.15m deep. For the most part, this sealed a layer of dark brown sand, 003, with sub-angular limestone chunks and fragments of ceramic building material. A single sherd of 19th/20th century white china was recovered but not retained.

To the immediate east of the easternmost arch (see Fig. 2), a layer of small dressed rectangular blocks was observed, 002, set in a bedding layer of small rounded gravel in a matrix of grey/brown sand, 004. This was interpreted as a possible cobbled surface, and it extended for approximately 6m to the east of the arch.

The area to the immediate east of the western arch revealed several chunks of roughly dressed limestone, incorporated into deposit 003.

7.0 Discussion and conclusion

The majority of the groundworks exposed relatively recent make up layers sealed beneath the modern road surface. However, a cobbled surface of uncertain date was observed in Minster Yard. The proximity of the cobbles to the modern ground surface suggest that this layer is of probable early modern date, and most likely represents a previous surfacing of Minster Yard.

To the immediate east of the western arch, a small number of roughly dressed limestone blocks were observed in deposit 003. The arch is situated in the eastern boundary wall of the Bishop's Palace grounds. Henry II granted these grounds for the construction of the palace in the mid 12th century. The south wall of the Roman legionary fortress defined the north side of the palace grounds, and the east wall of the Roman lower town defined the east wall, through which the monitored trench passed. The core of this wall still survives, although extensively rebuilt throughout the Middle Ages (Ambrose, 1980). It is possible that the rubble exposed in the trench represents waste building material from one of the many phases of refacing and rebuilding of the wall from the Romano-British period onwards.

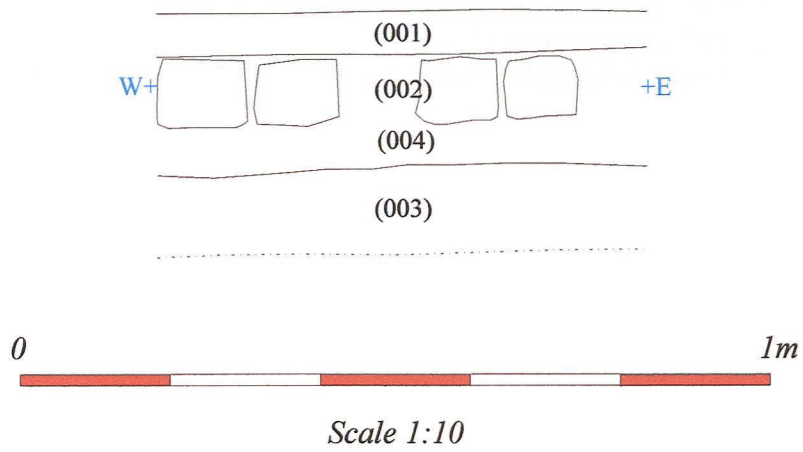


Fig. 3: Section showing cobbled surface exposed in Minster Yard (scale 1:10)

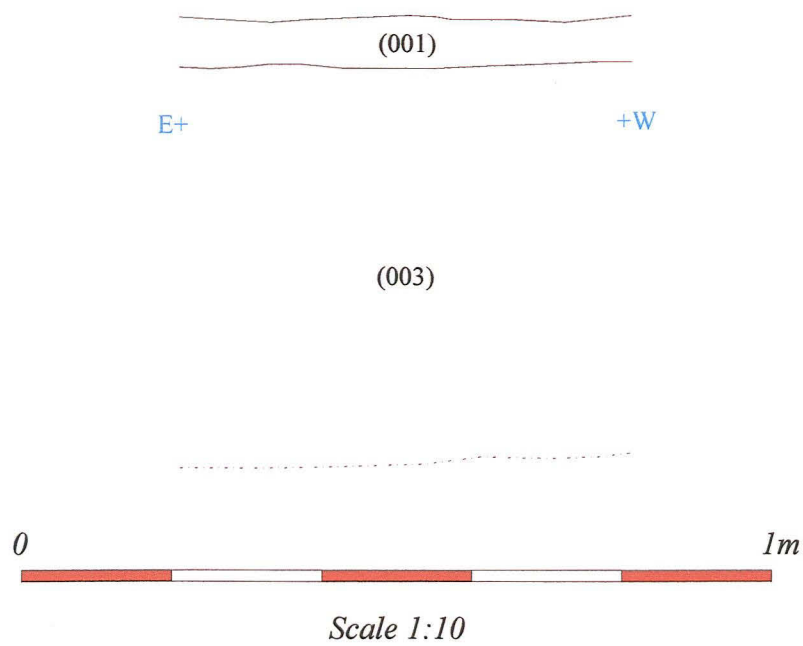


Fig. 4: Representative section showing stratigraphic sequence (scale 1:10)

8.0 Effectiveness of methodology

The methodology chosen was appropriate to the nature of the groundworks. The monitoring of the trench exposed few deposits of archaeological significance, other than a possible early modern cobbled surface to Minster Yard, and possible evidence of remodelling of the Roman town wall into the boundary of the Bishop's Palace. The groundworks have had limited impact on the archaeological resource.

9.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank British Telecommunications plc for this commission.

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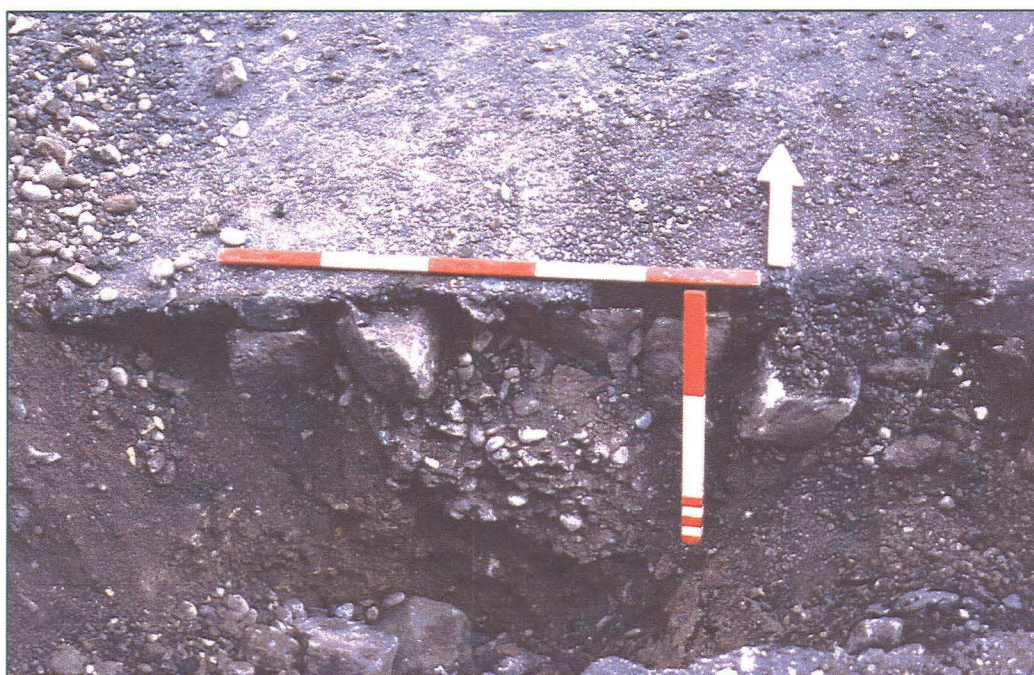
11.0 Site archive

The documentary 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 2004.64.

APPENDIX 1: Colour Plates



Pl. 1: View along the line of the cable trench, looking west from the east end of the trench.



Pl. 2: Shot of the former cobbled surface of Minster Yard, looking north

APPENDIX 2: List of archaeological contexts

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Description</i>
001	Layer	Modern road surface
002	Layer	roughly dressed ?granite blocks c.9x9x9cm
003	Layer	Dark brown sand – early modern make up layer
004	Layer	Gravel bedding layer for cobbled surface 002