M4/10

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF, LAND OFF ST. MARK'S STREET/BRAYFORD WHARF, (THE JUNXION), LINCOLN

NGR: SK 97292 70887
SITE CODE: JUNX03
ACC. NO.: 2004.72

Report prepared for North Midlands Construction plc,

by

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July 2004

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EVENT L14888 SOURCES L19346 L19347 PRN 70376 - UNDATED

ACC. NO. 2004.72

Summary

- *An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the groundworks for a mixed-use development on land at The Junxion, Lincoln.*
- *The site lies in an area of high archaeological potential; with a possibility that redevelopment of the area would expose remains of Romano-British, medieval and later date.*
- *The groundworks exposed a series of 19th/20th demolition deposits. A pit excavated to assess diesel contamination revealed an undated peat horizon and a series of deposits evidencing riverine deposition; typical of the known stratigraphy of the area.*

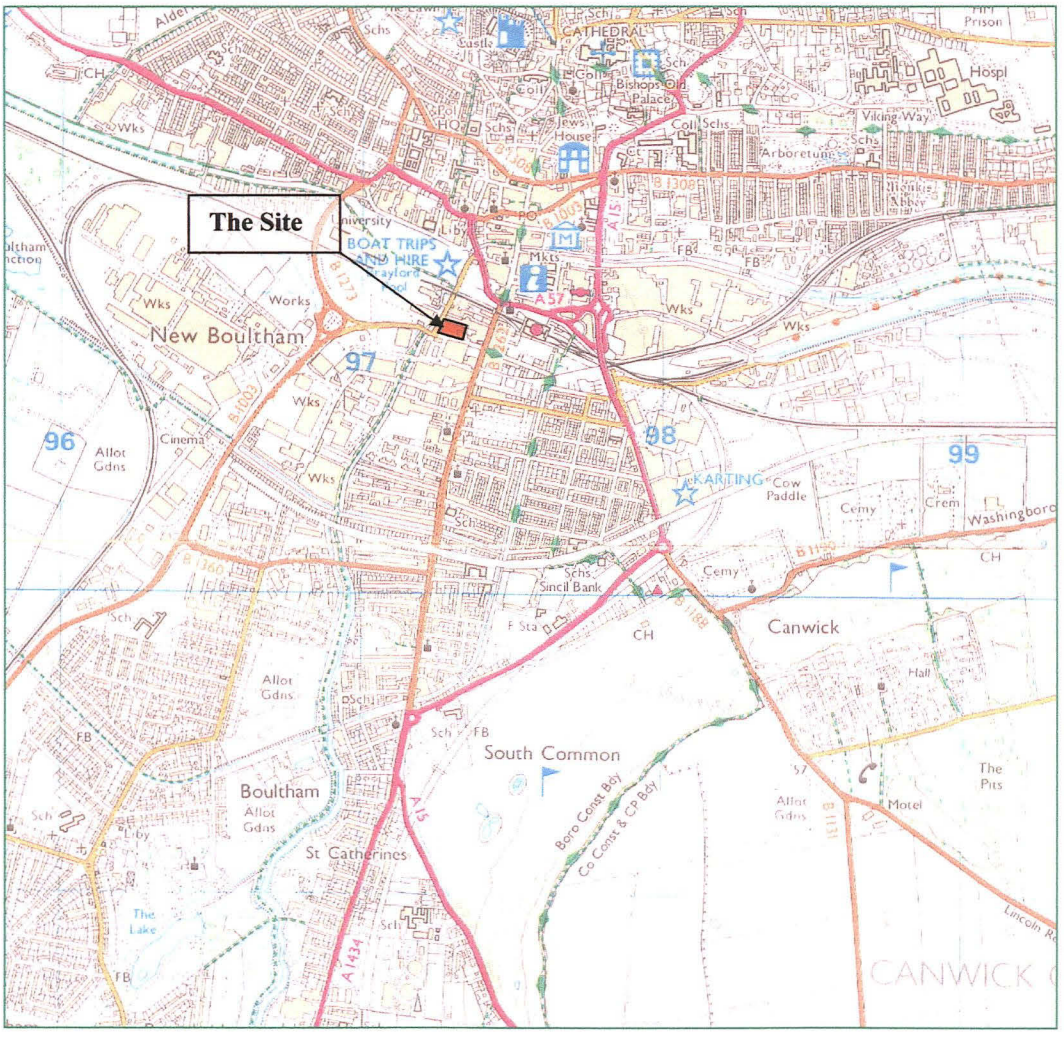

Fig.1: General site location (scale 1:25,000)
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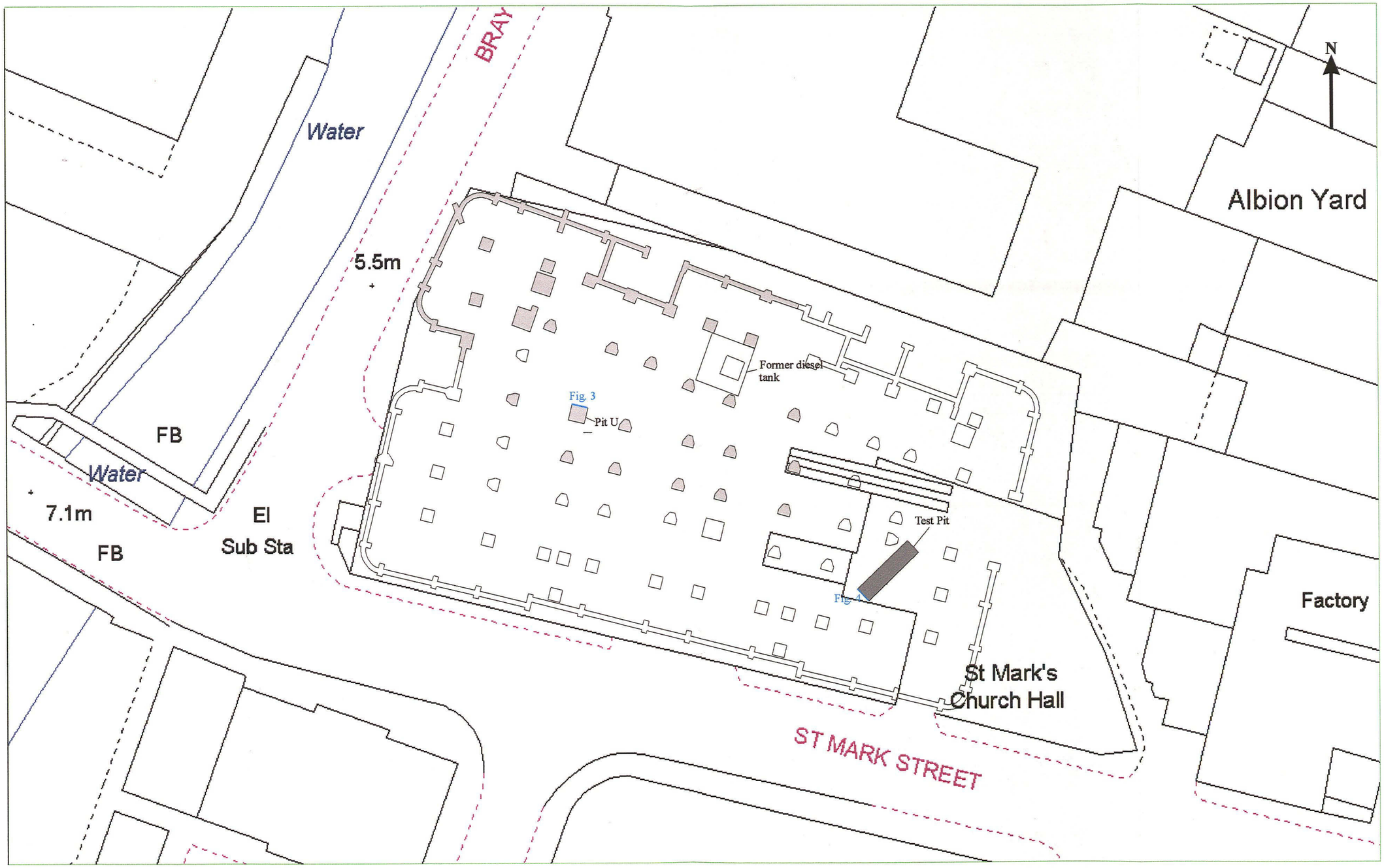

Fig. 2: Ground plan of the proposed development. The areas in light grey were excavated prior to the first visit by an archaeologist, the areas in white were excavated without archaeological monitoring. The dark grey box represents the pit dug to assess diesel contamination (scale 1:500)

1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) was commissioned by North Midlands Construction plc to carry out an archaeological watching brief on land off St. Marks Street/Brayford Wharf (The Junxion), Lincoln.

These works were undertaken to fulfil the objectives of a formal project brief issued by the City Archaeologist for Lincoln, 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, 1999), 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, the City Archaeologist, 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 development site is situated to the south of the historic core of the city, on low lying land to the south of the River Witham. It is bounded by St. Mark's Street to the south, Brayford Wharf East to the west and Baker Street to the north and east (NGR SK 97292 70887).

The geology of the area consists of alluvium (deposited by successive flood events from the nearby River Witham) over a solid geology of Lower Lias Clay (British Geological Survey, 1973).

3.0 Planning background

Lincoln City Council granted full planning permission for the erection of a nine-storey building, comprising 554 student flats and mixed-use retail units (planning ref. 2001/0852/F). This permission was granted subject to the undertaking of an archaeological watching brief on all associated groundworks.

4.0 Archaeological and historical background

Small amounts of prehistoric material, including Neolithic and Bronze Age flint implements have been identified within the city, and attest to some degree of prehistoric occupation (Jones & Stocker, 2003). Late Iron Age settlement remains have been identified at 181-3 High Street, less than 100m north-east of the current site, occupying one of several small islands of sand, within the low-lying marshy areas that were typical of this area of the city in the late prehistoric period. Environmental sampling in advance of construction of the new university was carried out along the south side of the Brayford Pool. This work suggested a natural wetland was developing throughout the Neolithic and Bronze Age making the current development area in a region largely unsuited to sustained settlement in the later prehistoric period (*ibid.*).

Following the Roman invasion of Britain in AD43, Legio IX *Hispana* was despatched to quell the northern regions of the country, and established a legionary fortress at Lincoln in the second half of the 1st century AD (*ibid.*). This was constructed on the high ground to the north of the river. However, military tombstones found on Monson Street (c.200m south of the site) attest to the presence of a preceding fort in the area of South Common (Todd, 1991). By the end of the first century AD, the military role of the fortress site was replaced by a civilian settlement, which acquired 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 surviving fabric of the fortress was reused and redeveloped for civilian use. However, the population of the town rapidly expanded beyond the defences of the legionary fortress, spreading further downhill towards the river, this area also being walled by the later 3rd century (Todd, 1991).

To the south-west of the walled city, a large scale pottery industry developed in the regions of Swanpool and Boultham (west and south-west of the current site).

South of the lower walled city (south of the Stonebow), an extensive ribbon development extended along Ermine Street, which broadly follows the line of the modern High Street. The current site is approximately 50m west of High Street, in a low-lying area, which was still probably subject to seasonal flooding in the Roman period. This required the construction of a causeway to carry Ermine Street over the low-lying ground and the river, via the island of sand on which Iron Age settlement remains were exposed at 181-3 High Street (Jones, 2002).

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 (Todd, 1991). The arrival of Danish settlers in the 9th and 10th centuries initiated a phase of regrowth in the city, largely in the lower town, along the High Street, with the foundation of workshops, kilns and a mint. This area became known as Wigford in the medieval period, and continued to develop as an industrial suburb of the city.

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).

This expansion continued throughout the early medieval period, the wealth of the city being largely based on the export of cloth and 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).

The current site was formerly occupied by the Lincolnshire Roadcar bus depot, which was demolished in 2002.

Prior to the current phase of groundworks, archaeological monitoring was carried out on site during the removal of two diesel tanks, the excavation of four pits to assess diesel contamination, and during a programme of test piling. This indicated the possibility of exposing deposits relating to medieval and earlier waterfront activities, approximately 1.5m below the modern ground surface (Jones, 2003).

5.0 Methodology

Ground disturbance associated with redeveloping the area involved the excavation of a continuous foundation trench to support the outer wall of the building. Internally, a series of 2.5m by 2.5m pits were excavated to contain pile-driven pillars. These pits were excavated to a depth of c.1.5m. Archaeological monitoring was also carried out during the excavation of an inspection pit to assess the extent of diesel contamination on the site. These excavations were carried out using a 360° tracked machine fitted with a 0.9m wide toothed bucket.

The groundworks were monitored at all times by one experienced archaeologist. All plan and section surfaces were examined and intermittently cleaned. 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 an appropriate scale. 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. Jim Rylatt and Simon Savage monitored the groundworks on June 3rd and June 18th 2003.

6.0 Results

Prior to the arrival on site of the archaeologist, part of the outer wall foundation trench and most of the internal foundation pits had been excavated and largely filled with concrete and plastic cladding, making observation impossible. Several more of the foundation pits had been partially filled with concrete, leaving c.1m of the upper stratigraphy visible. This exposed few deposits of archaeological significance. The layers examined comprised a series of modern or early modern demolition deposits, including dumps of crushed brick and stone, slate, window glass and ash. The observed pits were lettered sequentially, but in only one example, Pit U, was any

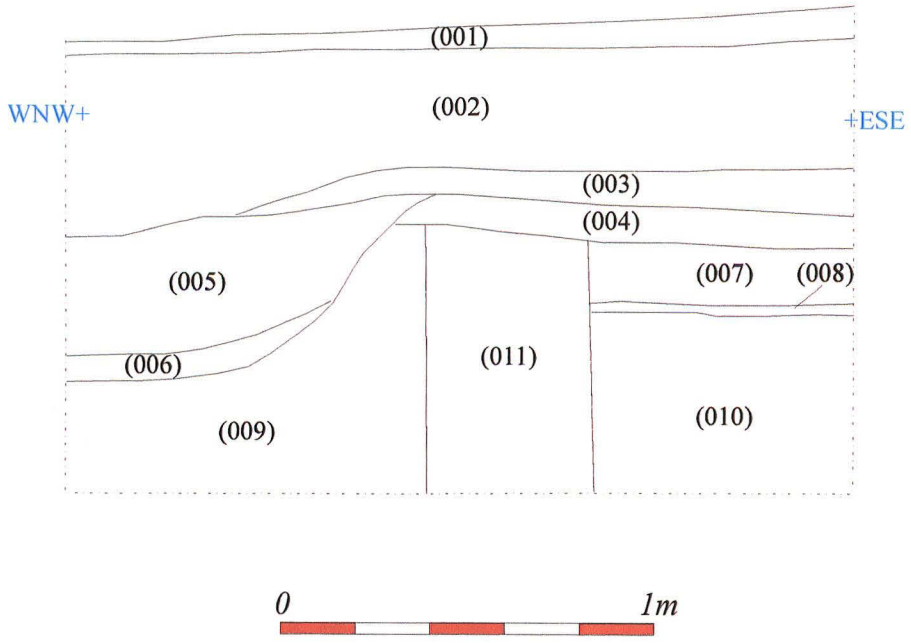

Fig. 3: Pit U, south facing section (scale 1:20)

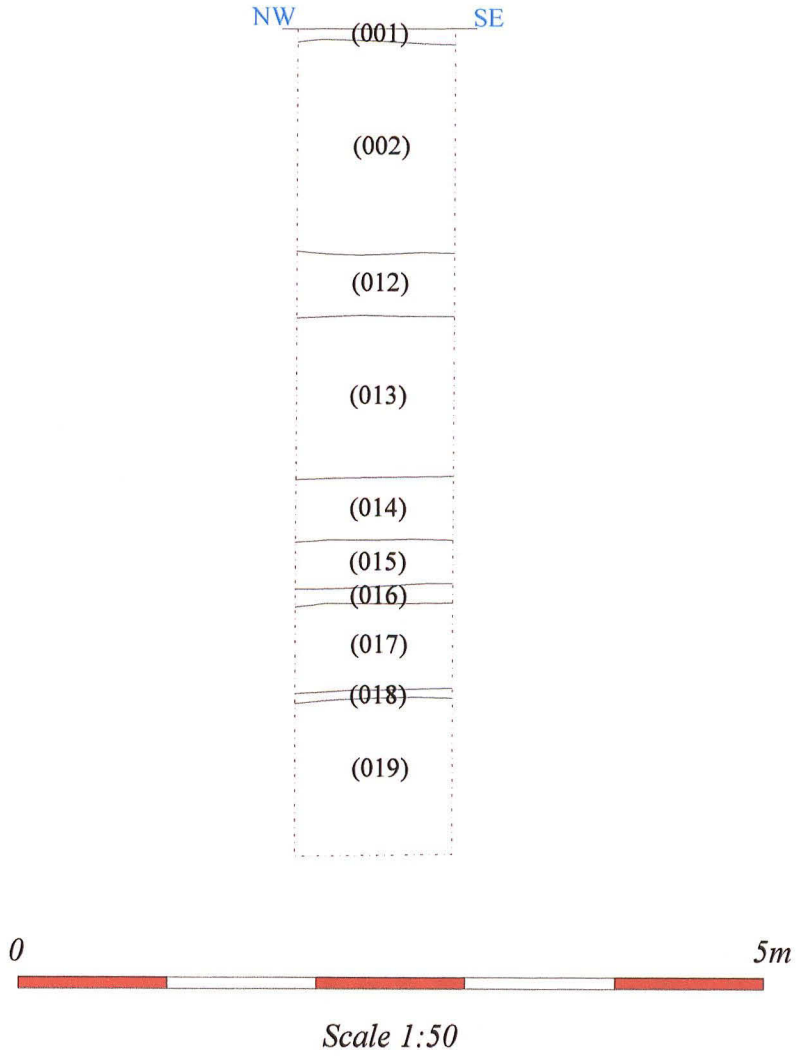

Fig. 4: Section showing stratigraphic sequence in pit excavated to assess diesel contamination (approximate scale 1:50)

differing stratigraphy observed: the foundation courses of demolished buildings of probable 19th century date (fig. 3).

The pit used to assess the extent of diesel contamination was machine excavated to a depth of c.5.5m below the modern ground surface. This exposed an extensive stratigraphic sequence but could not be accurately recorded, as health and safety requirements prevented anyone from operating within 3m of the edge of the pit. Fig. 4 represents an approximate scale drawing of the exposed stratigraphy.

The uppermost deposit in this sequence was a modern hardcore surface, 001, sealing a series of demolition deposits totalling 1.8m in depth. Beneath this was a brown/grey sandy silt, 013, a coarse grey sand, 014, and an orange sand, 015. A black silty peat horizon, 016, was exposed below 015. This was c.3.7m below the modern ground surface and was approximately 0.1m deep. Below this was 017, a dark grey silty sand, containing mussel shell and charcoal flecks, over a thin lens of blue clay, 018. The remaining 1.0m of the pit contained a natural deposit of slightly pinkish brown sand, 019. No dating evidence was recovered from any of these layers.

The remainder of the groundworks were completed without archaeological monitoring, as PCA was not informed.

7.0 Discussion and conclusion

No dating evidence was recovered during the programme of archaeological monitoring and as such it is difficult to make any detailed conclusions about the deposits exposed at site. In the foundation pits, only the uppermost layers of stratigraphy were observed, consisting of modern demolition deposits and make up layers. The pit excavated to assess diesel contamination did extend to the natural geology. The deposits exposed in this area again consisted of a series of upper layers of modern demolition materials. Beneath these however were a series of alluvial deposits; typical of the low-lying riverine environment that persisted in this area from prehistory through to the medieval period.

8.0 Effectiveness of methodology

The watching brief methodology showed that there had been much ground disturbance on site, with the upper deposits having been truncated by recent building works. It also showed that there was considerable contamination of the deposits by leakage of diesel. The monitoring of the diesel contamination pit did allow a reasonable profile through the stratigraphy to be observed, although this was very much a small keyhole excavation on a much larger site of considerable archaeological potential. It was unfortunate that much of the groundworks had been completed prior to the archaeologists being informed, and that the remainder was completed without monitoring. Monitoring of the building foundations would perhaps have allowed the recovery of dating evidence, which would have established a chronology for some of the deposits and events observed on site. It is possible that some of the archaeology on site was disturbed during the groundworks that were not monitored, and also that

areas of the site overlie significant archaeological deposits that are preserved in situ beneath the current development.

9.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank North Midlands Construction plc for this commission.

10.0 References

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11.0 Site archive

The documentary archive for the site is currently in the possession of Pre-Construct Archaeology. 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 2004.72.

APPENDIX 1: Colour Plates

Pl. 1: General view of the development area, showing the foundation pits partially backfilled with concrete. Looking north-east

Pl. 2: View of the pit excavated to assess diesel contamination. Looking south-west

APPENDIX 2: List of archaeological contexts

Context	*Type*	*Description*
001	Layer	Modern limestone hardcore
002	Layer	Demolition deposit – modern brick rubble etc.
003	Layer	Demolition deposit – brick and mortar fragments
004	Layer	Grey/brown silty sand with brick & mortar fragments
005	Layer	Demolition deposit – brick and mortar fragments
006	Layer	Lens of shattered slate & window glass
007	Layer	Demolition deposit – brick and mortar fragments
008	Layer	Lens of black sandy ash
009	Layer	Crushed concrete & brick rubble – former yard surface
010	Layer	Grey sandy silt, brick and mortar fragments
011	Structure	Brick wall – former building
012	Layer	Demolition deposit – brick, tile, limestone fragments
013	Layer	Brown/grey sandy silt
014	Layer	Coarse grey sand
015	Layer	Orange coarse sand
016	Layer	Dark brown/black silty peat
017	Layer	Dark grey silty sand
018	Layer	Thin lens of blue clay
019	Layer	Pinkish brown sand - natural