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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
OF A FOUNDATION TRENCH AT
THE VICARAGE,
BOSTON,
LINCOLNSHIRE**

Work Undertaken For
Lincoln Diocesan Trust and Board of Finance Ltd

December 1994



A P S
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES

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A series of pits is associated with the demolition of a c. 13th-century building and the construction of the medieval vicarage. Some archaeological deposits of medieval date, believed to pre-date the area, were not affected by the development.

1. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

On the 22nd September 1988, an archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the construction of a basement car park at adjacent to the former Boston Lincolne Street (B005/001). The basement is situated to the south of St Botolph's church, in the small patch of Boston (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Lincoln's Inland Area and Boston's Finance Ltd and was carried out by Archaeological Project Services in accordance with a brief set by the Boston Community Archaeology.

2.2 Topography and Geology

Development is centred to the rear of the present vicarage building which is situated

approximately 30m north of Boston town centre (Fig. 1). Although, as an urban setting, the area has not been mapped by the Soil Survey, aerial records suggest that local soils are likely to be Fenland alluvium, consisting of clay, silt and sand. The area is situated on a slight rise, with a slight dip to the south. However, the presence of an River Witham may suggest some local variations in the level of the ground.

2.3 Archaeological Setting

The Vicarage has an area of about 0.1ha. It is a very small building, mostly 13th-century, medieval, and 18th-century. Although there is evidence for prehistoric and Roman-British activity within the Boston area, none has been found in the vicinity of the development. It has been suggested that any remains of a prehistoric or Roman-British site would be found under the vicarage building and that any remains of a prehistoric or Roman-British site would be found under the vicarage building.

Medieval activity is well represented in Boston. Although not mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, it would appear that Boston was a small market town at the time of the Domesday Book. The vicarage was built in the 13th century and the building is the best example of a medieval church in the town. The vicarage was built in the 13th century and the building is the best example of a medieval church in the town. The vicarage was built in the 13th century and the building is the best example of a medieval church in the town.

The Vicarage is centred to the north of the present church of St Botolph's (B005/002). But in 1304, the present building replaced an earlier wooden church. To the north of the church a quadrangular building shown on early maps may have been the site of an associated friary (B005/066). This structure

1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during excavations in advance of an extension to the Vicarage, Boston. The watching brief monitored the excavations for the foundations.

Development at The Vicarage affects an area containing archaeological remains dating from the medieval period (1066-1500 AD). The site is located within the medieval core of Boston and is near the church of St Botolph's, built in 1309.

A series of deposits associated with the demolition of a c. 19th century building and the construction of the modern vicarage were encountered. However, archaeological deposits of medieval date, believed to be located in the area, were not affected by the development.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

On the 20th September 1994, an archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of a foundation trench in advance of an extension to be built adjoining The Vicarage, Boston, Lincolnshire (NGR TF 326 442). The Vicarage is located to the north of St Botolph's church, in the civil parish of Boston (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Lincoln Diocesan Trust and Board of Finance Ltd and was carried out by Archaeological Project Services in accordance with a brief set by the Boston Community Archaeologist.

2.2 Topography and Geology

Development is centred to the rear of the present vicarage building which is situated

approximately 50m north of Boston town centre (Fig. 2). Although, as an urban setting, the area has not been mapped by the Soil Survey, nearby records suggest that local soils are likely to be Tanvats association, stoneless, silty, silty over clayey and clayey soils or Wisbech association, silts over clayey (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 319). However, the proximity of the River Witham may suggest more alluvial deposits. Local topography is relatively flat and lies about 3m above sea level.

2.3 Archaeological Setting

The Vicarage lies in an area of dense archaeological activity with evidence mainly from the medieval period. Although there is evidence for prehistoric and Romano-British activity within the Boston area, none so far has been found in the vicinity of the development site. It has been suggested that any remains of this period may well be buried under alluvial deposits and thus not appear in the current archaeological record (Harden, 1978).

Medieval activity is well represented in Boston. Although not mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086, it would appear that Boston was a small hamlet associated with the village of Skirbeck. By 1200AD the town had grown and the building of the barditch (B05/001), a defensive ditch encircling the town, was completed. Boston's importance as a port grew and the town became a major trading centre, attracting many foreign merchants. Monastic orders were also attracted to the town.

The Vicarage is centred to the north of the parish church of St Botolph's (B05/002). Built in 1309, the present building replaced an earlier wooden church. To the north of the church a quadrangular building shown on early maps may have been the site of an associated friary (B05/066). This structure

would appear to have been demolished to make way for the Session's House built in 1841 (B05/065). Excavations undertaken 50m to the north of the present investigation site, in 1989, revealed a sequence of deposits from the 12th century to the 14th century including many structural remains.

3. AIMS

The aim of the watching brief was to identify surviving archaeological deposits and, if present, record them in detail to enable their date, function and origin to be determined.

4. METHODS

Trenches for the foundations were excavated to a depth of 0.55m. The sides of the trenches were cleaned by hand. Each archaeological deposit or feature revealed was allocated a unique reference number with an individual written description. Natural geological deposits were also recorded. A photographic record was compiled and selected sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20.

5. RESULTS

Records of the deposits and features identified during the watching brief were examined. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them. One phase was identified:

Phase 1 Modern deposits

Phase 1 Modern deposits

Two walls represent the earliest of the deposits of this phase. Wall 10 was aligned

north to south and constructed of mortared brick. Wall 11, also of brick, was aligned east to west and abutted wall 10. Also abutting wall 10 to the west a concrete slab, measuring c.1m wide, was recorded (9). A layer of brown sandy silt (8) lay above 9 to the west. Within the area defined by the two walls a dark brown silty sand layer with rubble was observed (7 and 12). These remains had been truncated, presumably during demolition to provide a level surface (13).

Above 13 a mixed deposit of broken mortar and building material (6) was sealed by yellow sand (5). These two layers have been identified as make-up layers. A linear cut (4) providing a trench for the foundations of the present vicarage building was recorded as having a fill of brown sand (3). A yellow sand layer (2) sealed 3 and provided a foundation for a paved area (1).

6. DISCUSSION

Deposits encountered are predominantly related to the present vicarage building on the site and included two make-up layers and a foundation trench. This had sealed the remains of a demolished building, destroyed between thirty and forty years ago (*Pers Comm*, on-site contractor).

7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigations at the Vicarage, Boston, established that recent deposits occur to at least below 0.55m of the present ground surface. The depth of the foundation trenches was insufficient to exceed the limit of modern disturbance. Consequently, archaeological deposits of medieval date, believed to exist in the area, were not disturbed by the development.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wish to thank Lincoln Diocesan Trust and Board of Finance Ltd for funding the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. Steve Haynes coordinated the work and Dave Start edited this report. Jim Bonnor, the Boston District Community Archaeologist provided information from the relevant parish files maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Manager: Steve Haynes
Site Assistants: Chris Moulis
Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner
Post-excavation Analyst: Paul Cope-Faulkner

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Harden, G., 1978 *Medieval Boston and its Archaeological Implications*

Hodge, C.A.H., Burton, R.G.O., Corbett, W.M., Evans, R. and Seale, R.S., 1984 *Soils and their Use in Eastern England*, Soil Survey of England and Wales 13

11. ABBREVIATIONS

Numbers prefixed with B are the primary reference numbers used by the Boston District Community Archaeologist.

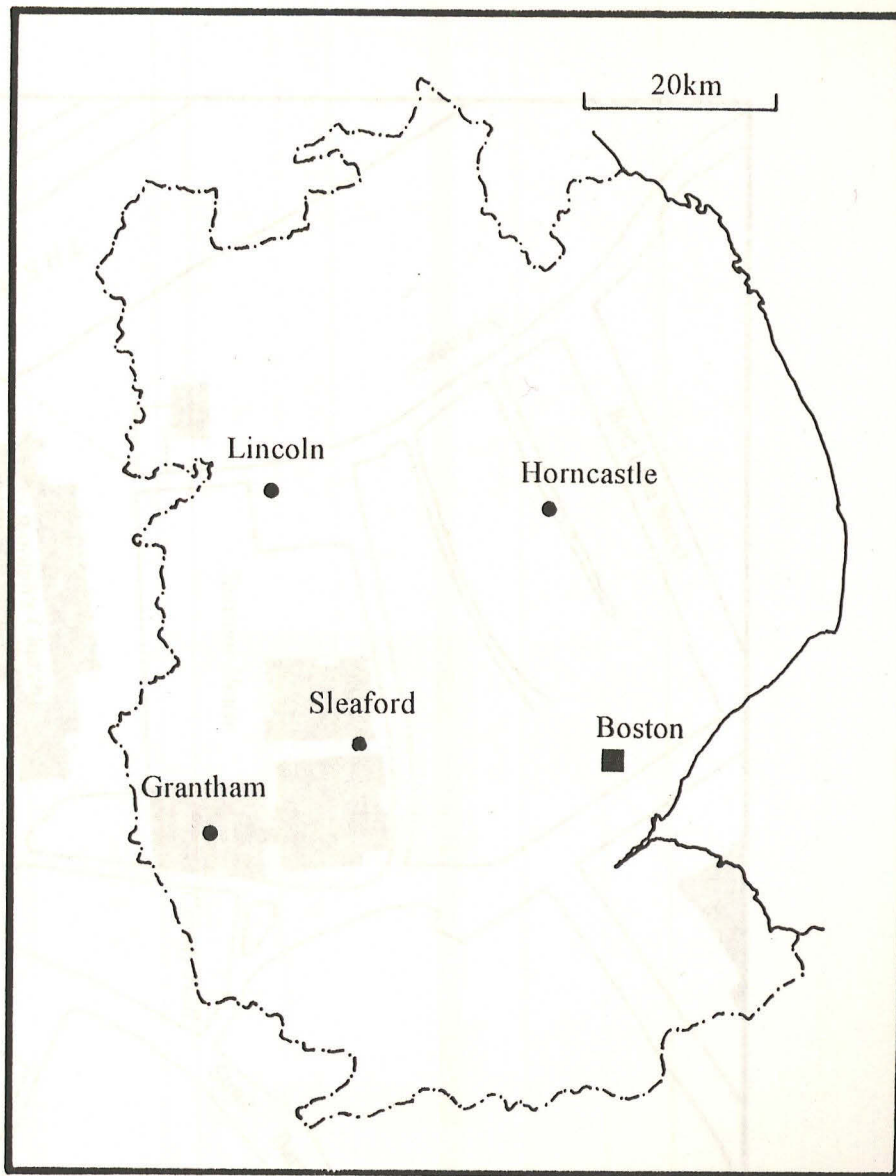
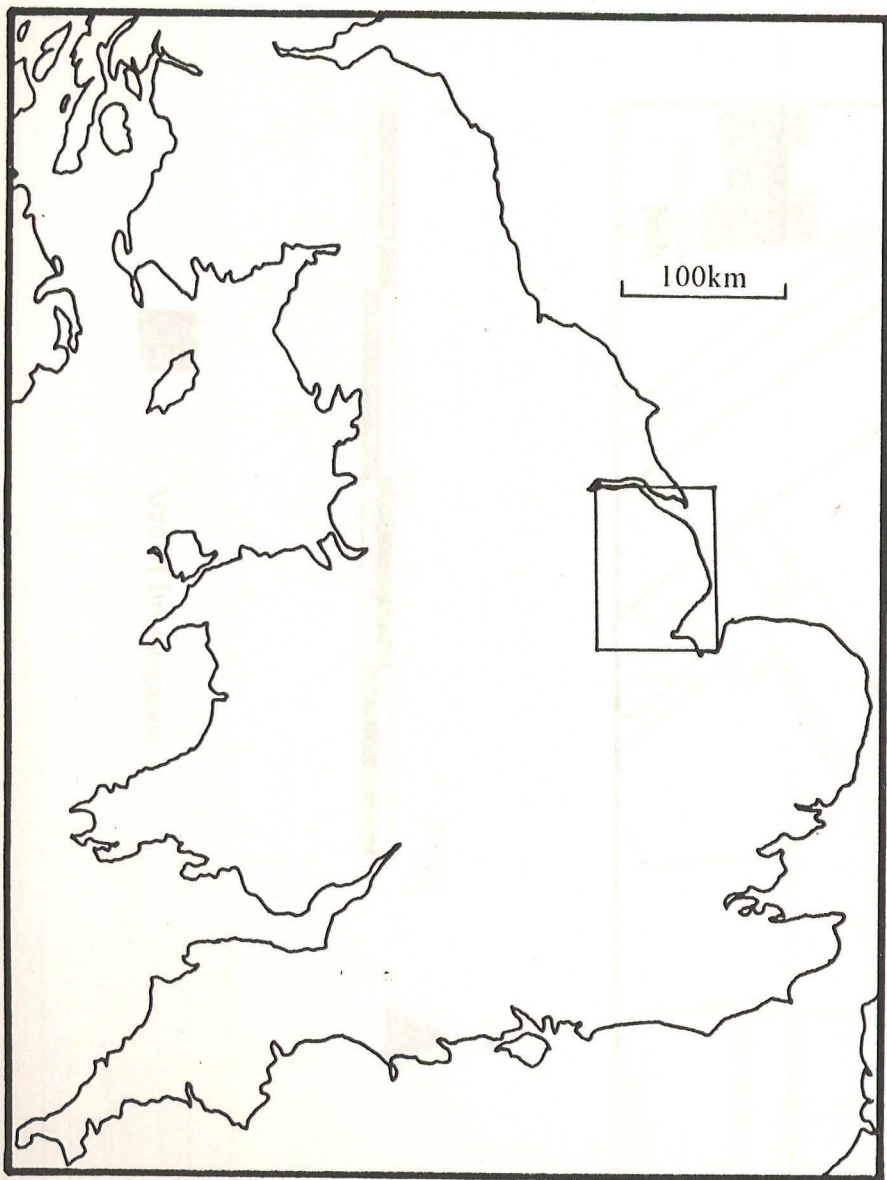
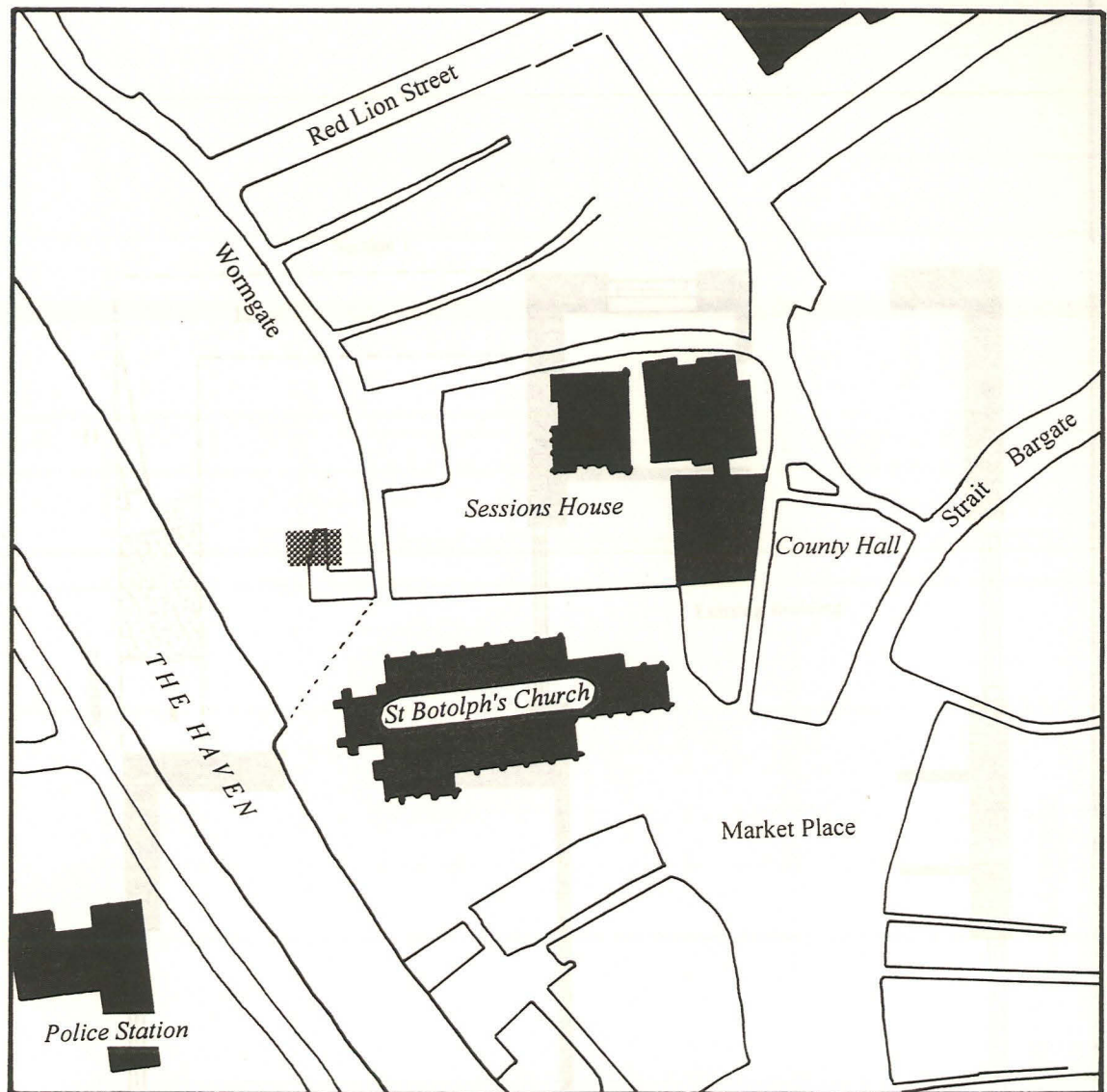


Fig. 1 GENERAL LOCATION PLAN

Fig. 3 Plan of Foundations showing

Fig. 2 Site Location Plan



Area of Investigation

Fig. 3 Plan of Foundations, showing Archaeological Remains

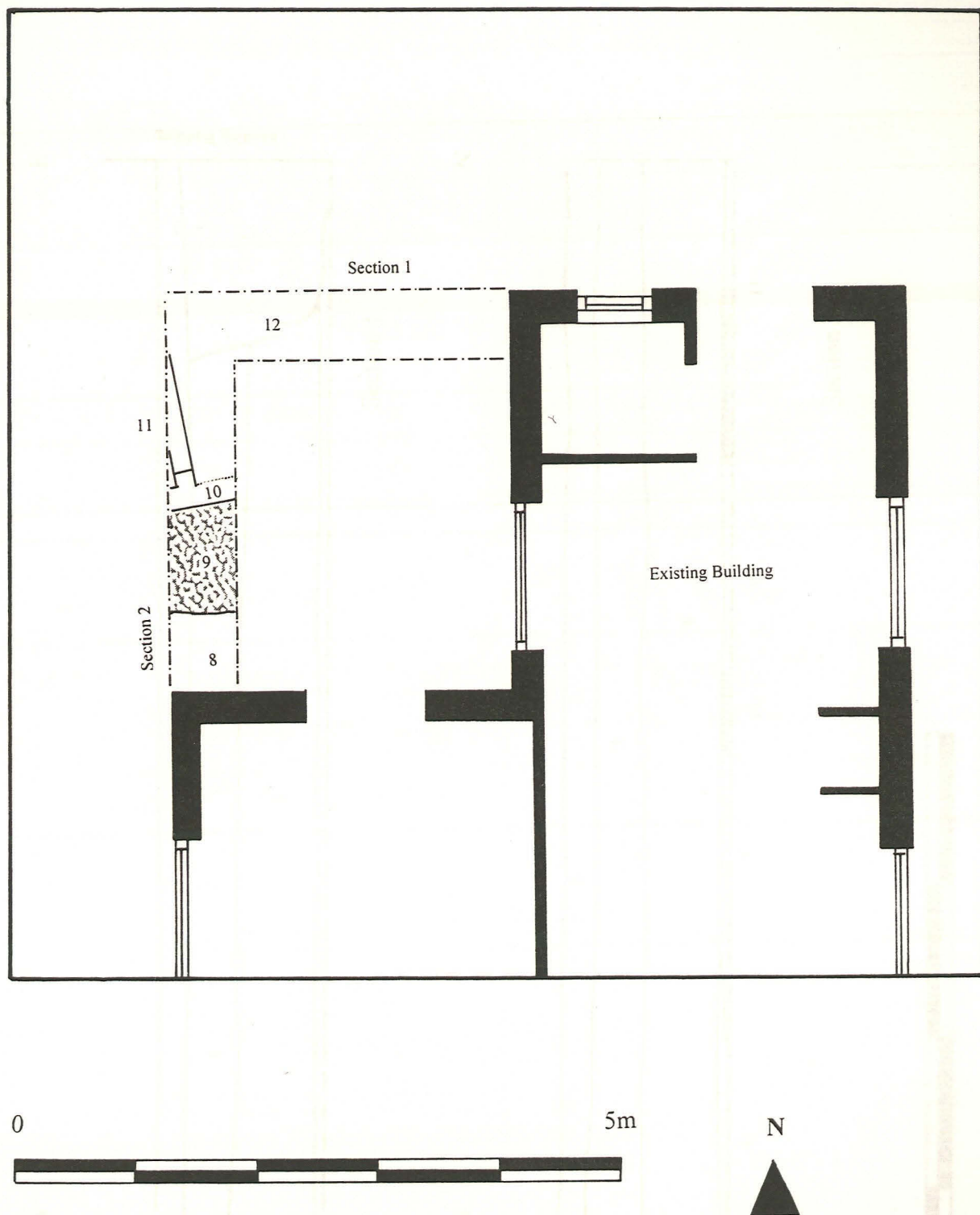


Fig. 5 Extract of Hall's Map Fig. 4 Sections 1 and 2
Showing Area of Investigation

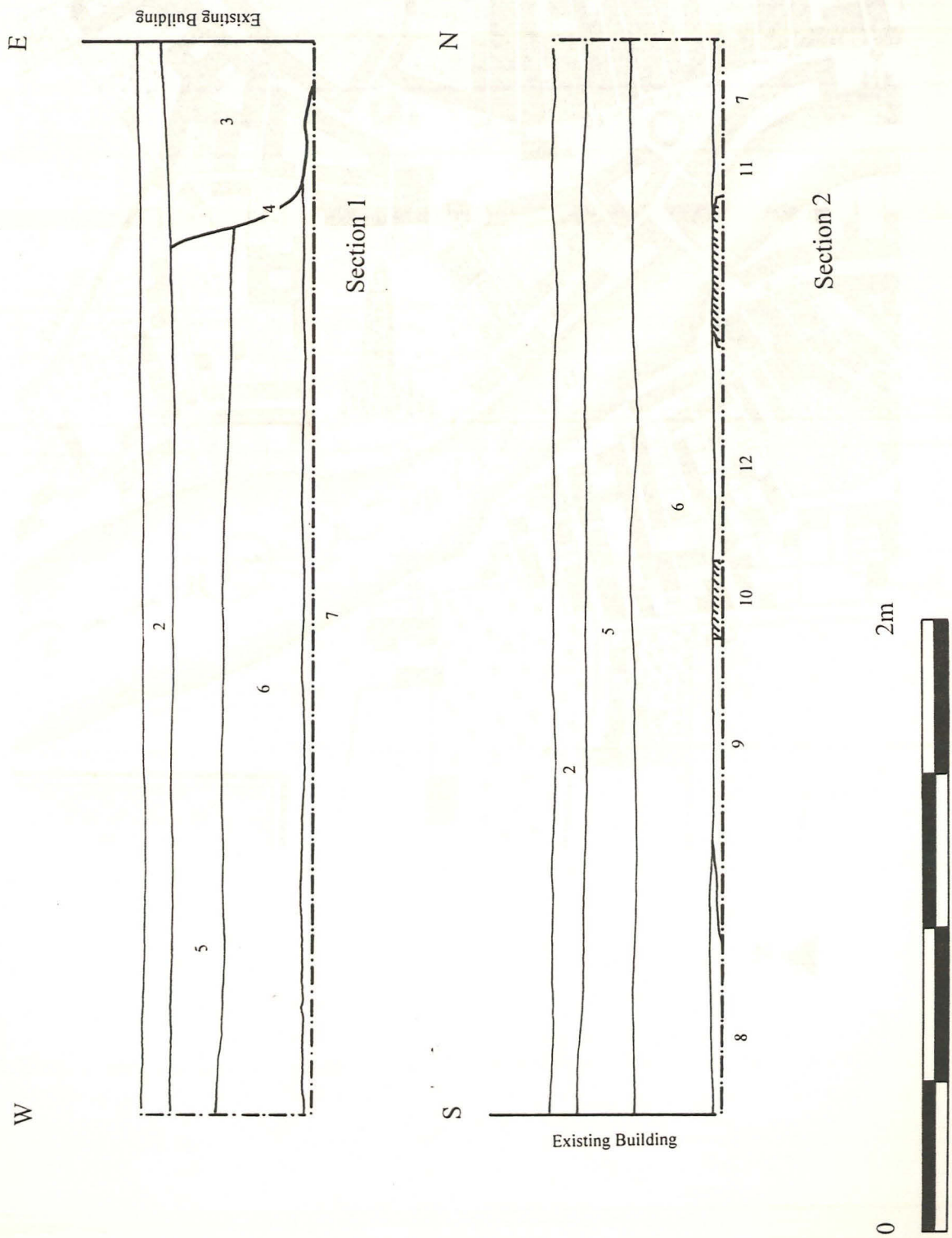
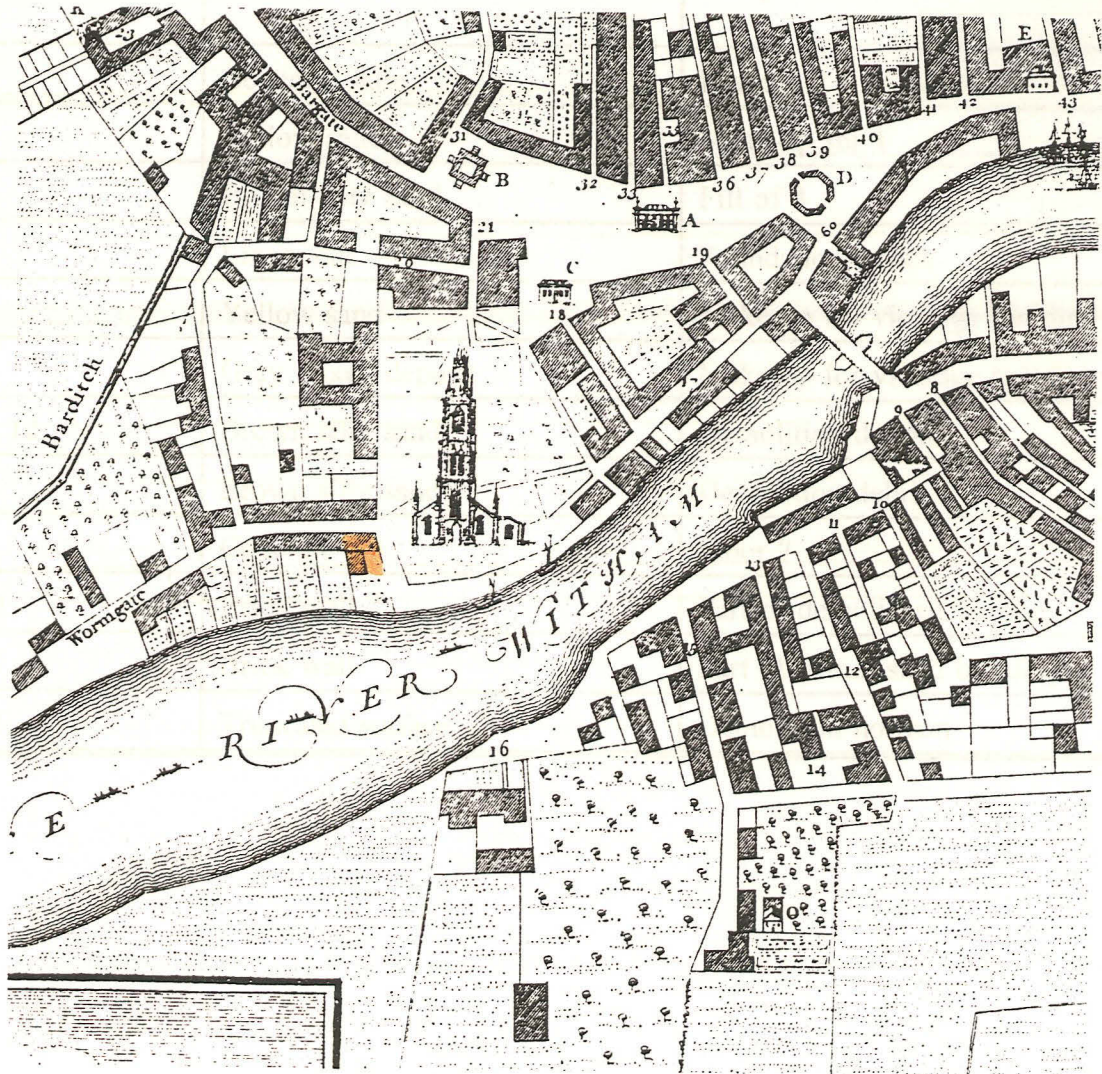


Fig. 5 Extract of Hall's Map of Boston 1741,
Showing Area of Investigation



APPENDIX 1

Context Summary

Context number	Description	Interpretation
1	Concrete slabs	Paving
2	Yellow sand	Make-up for 1
3	Brown silty sand	Fill of 4
4	Linear cut	Foundation trench
5	Yellow sand	Make-up for vicarage building
6	Grey mixed deposit	Make-up for vicarage building
7, 12	Brown silty sand	Demolition debris
8	Brown silty sand	Demolition debris ?
9	Concrete	Floor ?
10	Brick wall	Part of demolished building
11	Brick wall	Part of demolished building
13	Truncated surface	Demolition horizon

APPENDIX 2

The Archive

The archive consists of:

- 13 Context records
 - 1 Photographic record
 - 3 Scale drawings
 - 1 Stratigraphic matrix

All primary records are currently kept at:

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

City and County Museum, Lincoln Accession Number: :94
Archaeological Project Services project code BVE94