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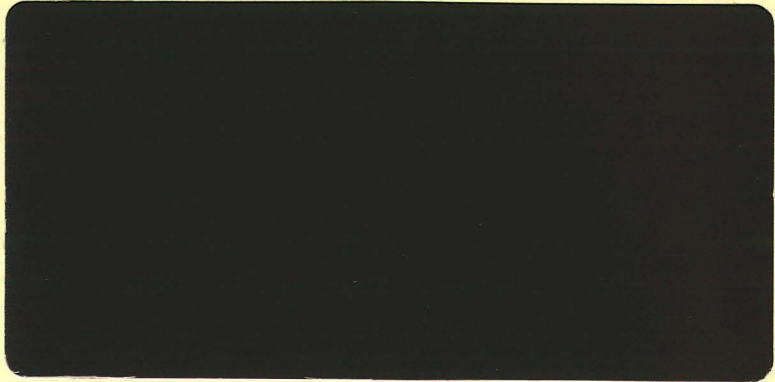
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
OF A DEVELOPMENT AT
2-4 HIGH STREET,
HORNCastle,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(HHS94)**



A P S
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
OF A DEVELOPMENT AT
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HORNCastle,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(HHS94)**

Work Undertaken For
Bramall Design Build Ltd

November 1995

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1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during development at 2-4 High Street, Horncastle. The watching brief monitored the excavation of the foundation trenches for a new building.

Development at High Street affects an area containing archaeological remains dating from the prehistoric to medieval periods. Flint and other stone tools represent prehistoric activity dating from the Neolithic period (4000 - 2000 BC). Evidence for Romano-British activity takes the form of walls relating to a Roman military camp established in the 3rd century AD. Anglo-Saxon funerary finds have also been recovered. The church of St Mary, founded during the medieval period, together with excavated evidence of house plots in the High Street, have contributed to an understanding of the medieval occupation of the area.

This work identified a sequence of modern building debris and features, including a brick-lined duct, sealed by a concrete slab. Two pits, a posthole, a ditch and a gully, all of indeterminate date, cut the natural sands. Although lacking dating evidence, the gully and ditch share a common alignment with a previously discovered Late Saxon ditch and may be of the same period. A clay-packed foundation trench from an earlier, though also undated, building was also revealed.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

On the 30th November 1994 and 3rd February 1995, an archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of foundation trenches for a new building at 2-4 High Street, Horncastle, Lincolnshire

(National Grid Reference TF 2598 6962). The archaeological work was commissioned by Bramall Design Build Ltd, and carried out by Archaeological Project Services.

2.2 Topography and Geology

Horncastle is situated 29km east of Lincoln and 26km north-northwest of Boston in East Lindsey District, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1). Horncastle lies on river terrace gravels close to the 30m contour in the valley of the River Bain, near the southwest corner of the Lincolnshire Wolds. Upper Jurassic clays comprise the solid geology.

Local soils comprise the Swaffham Prior series, coarse loamy brown calcareous earths, and soils of the Fladbury 2 association overlying the river alluvium (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 196, 316). Immediately south of the investigation site is the River Waring which flows west to meet the River Bain at a point approximately 0.5km to the southwest.

The development is located 150m northeast of the town centre as defined by St Mary's Church (Figs. 2 and 3).

2.3 Archaeological Setting

High Street, Horncastle is located in an area of archaeological activity dating from the prehistoric to medieval periods. Prehistoric activity, although limited, is represented by finds of mesolithic flint tools along High Street (SMR 42691) and early Neolithic flint tools from Bridge Street (SMR 42711). Neolithic polished stone axes have been found *c.* 200m east and *c.* 100 northwest of the present investigation area (SMR 41854 and 42222 respectively). Also, a Bronze Age perforated basalt hammer (SMR 41867) was found south of the River Waring.

During the 18th century, the antiquarian, William Stukeley, identified Horncastle with the Roman settlement *Bannovallum*, although this identification is disputed (Robinson 1983, 26). The study area lies just east of a stone-walled late Roman military enclosure (SMR 00044). Remnants of the enclosure walls survive and excavations and watching briefs have accurately identified the circuit of the stone wall (Field and Hurst 1984, 49-50). The alignments of High Street, Manor House Street, Bridge Street and Chapel Lane, suggest that these fossilize the pattern of the Roman road system through, and exiting, the stone-walled enclosure.

Located just north of the site, Anglo-Saxon funerary finds have been retrieved. The material encompasses an Anglo-Saxon inhumation with grave goods comprising a bronze annular brooch, glass and paste beads and an iron knife (SMR 42214). Anglo-Saxon metalwork and pottery have also been recovered from an archaeological excavation (SMR 42714) within the former Roman walled circuit.

Medieval occupation in Horncastle is represented by the church of St. Mary (SMR 42209). A priest's house was situated approximately 100m northwest of the church (SMR 42710), and an undated, though probably medieval, cross was located on the north side of the Market Place (SMR 42208). Excavations have revealed posthole constructions of medieval date along the High Street (SMR 42715), and, during the medieval period, a ford (SMR 41868) was located on the site of the present bridge over the River Bain (Heritage Lincolnshire 1993a).

During 1993, an archaeological evaluation was carried out just north of the site. Redeposited Neolithic flintwork constituted the earliest finds, and Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon artefacts were also retrieved.

Ephemeral traces of medieval and later buildings were also identified (Heritage Lincolnshire 1993b).

3. AIMS

The aims of the watching brief were to locate and record archaeological deposits, if present, and to determine their type, function and origin.

4. METHODS

Foundation trenches were excavated by hand to a depth of 0.7m. Trench edges were then cleaned to identify any archaeological remains. Each archaeological deposit or feature revealed within the trench was allocated a unique reference number with an individual written description. Natural geological deposits were also recorded. A photographic record was compiled and plans and sections were recorded at scales 1:20 and 1:50.

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. Three phases were identified:

Phase 1	Natural deposits
Phase 2	Undated Archaeological deposits
Phase 3	Modern deposits

Phase 1 Natural deposits

A natural layer of variable yellowish brown/white sand (Contexts 11, 12, 22, 23, 26, 29, 38 and 39) occurred across the site.

Phase 2 Undated archaeological deposits

Cutting the phase 1 deposit was a linear ditch, 1.20m wide and 0.24m deep (10 and 21). Aligned east to west, the ditch was filled by a yellow to red brown sand (9 and 20). Approximately 2m to the west was one side of an apparently linear, east-west cut (35). At least 1.5m long, it was filled with stony brown sand (34). This cut feature may be another part of the ditch (10, 21).

In section 1 this ditch had been truncated by a sub-rectangular cut (8). Containing dark olive brown silty sand (7), it was tentatively identified as a pit, though of unknown function (Fig. 6).

The pit was truncated by another linear feature (6 and 19), 0.66m wide and 0.26m deep. Interpreted as a drainage gully and aligned east-west, this feature appeared in both sections 1 and 2 (Fig. 6). The feature was recorded as having a primary fill of reddish brown sand (18) and a backfill of dark greyish brown sandy silt (5 and 17).

Situated to the north, and visible in plan (Fig. 5), was a sub-rectangular cut (28). Measuring 1.60m by 1.20m, this feature, possibly a pit, had a fill of mid-grey sand with powdered mortar fragments (25).

Approximately 1m south of the possible ditch (35) was an oval cut (37). Measuring 0.5m by 0.35m in plan and filled with gritty grey sand (36), this is a posthole.

Along the south side of the site was a predominantly east-west linear cut (41). Over 1m wide and *c.* 11m long, this was filled with mortar-rich grey clay (40) and is tentatively interpreted as a foundation trench.

Phase 3 Modern deposits

Three linear features were identified (4, 16 and 30). Within each was a brick wall (24 and 27) sealed by a backfill deposit of crushed brick and mortar (3 and 15 - Fig. 5). The walls were subsequently truncated (31), and a deposits of hardcore (2 and 14) and concrete (1 and 13) were deposited over them.

Cutting the phase 2 possible ditch (35) was a 4m long, 0.5m wide curvilinear feature (33). Lined with bricks (32) that were blackened on their inner faces, this feature fed into a chimney at its northern limit.

6. DISCUSSION

Natural layers (Phase 1) representative of alluvial deposition were identified across the area. These probably derive from flooding of the two rivers in the vicinity.

Cutting the natural sands were a ditch and gully, a posthole and two possible pits (phase 2), indicating archaeological activity of unknown date. The ditch and gully were oriented east-west. This is in contradistinction to the trend of other boundaries in the High Street area. In this vicinity, both Roman and medieval alignments are generally north-northwest to south-southeast (Fig. 2). However, an east-west aligned Late Saxon ditch was recorded during excavations only 70m to the north (Heritage Lincolnshire 1993b, 9). This similarity of alignment may suggest some contemporaneity of the features and that the ditch and gully observed on the present watching brief are also Late Saxon in date.

Additionally, a clay-packed foundation trench was revealed at the southern edge of the investigation area. Although undated, this foundation probably marks a wall-line

of an earlier building.

Modern deposits (Phase 3), in the form of foundation trenches, brick walls and a brick-built flue indicate the former presence of a structure on the site. Demolition of the building and the laying of a concrete surface were the latest activities in the investigation area.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigation at High Street, Horncastle revealed that natural deposits occur within 0.45m of the present ground surface. Archaeological features of unknown, but possible Late Saxon, date also occur at the same depth. Recent deposits are associated with modern developments within the investigation area.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project services wish to thank Bramall Design Build Ltd for funding the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. Steve Haynes coordinated the work and Dave Start edited this report. Access to the County Sites and Monuments Record was provided by Ian George of the Archaeology Section, Lincolnshire County Council.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Manager: Steve Haynes
Site Assistant: Chris Moulis
Illustration: Denise Buckley, Paul Cope-Faulkner
Post-excavation Analyst: Paul Cope-Faulkner

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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 Bulletin No. 13* (Harpenden)

Robinson, D.N., 1983 *The Book of Horncastle and Woodhall Spa* (Buckingham)

11. ABBREVIATIONS

Numbers prefixed with SMR are the primary reference codes used by the County Sites and Monuments Record in Lincoln.

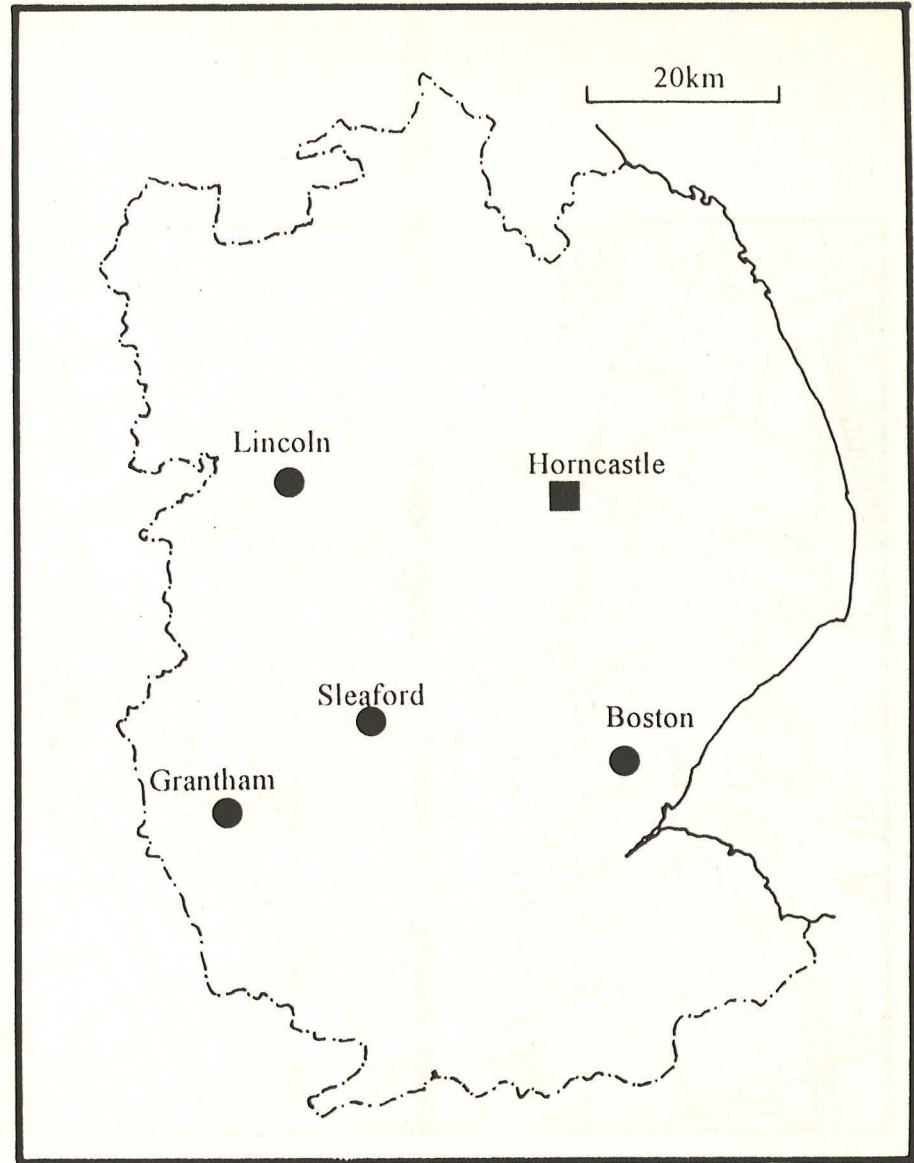
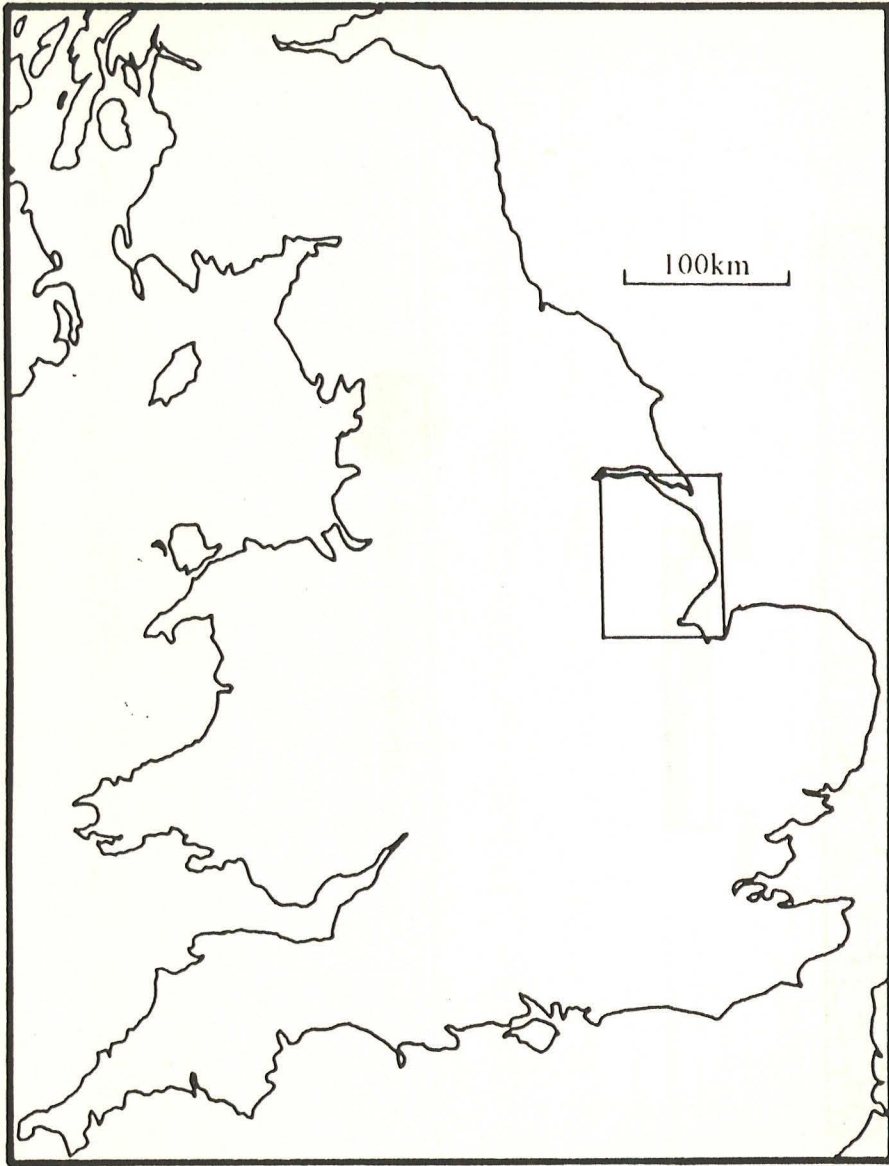


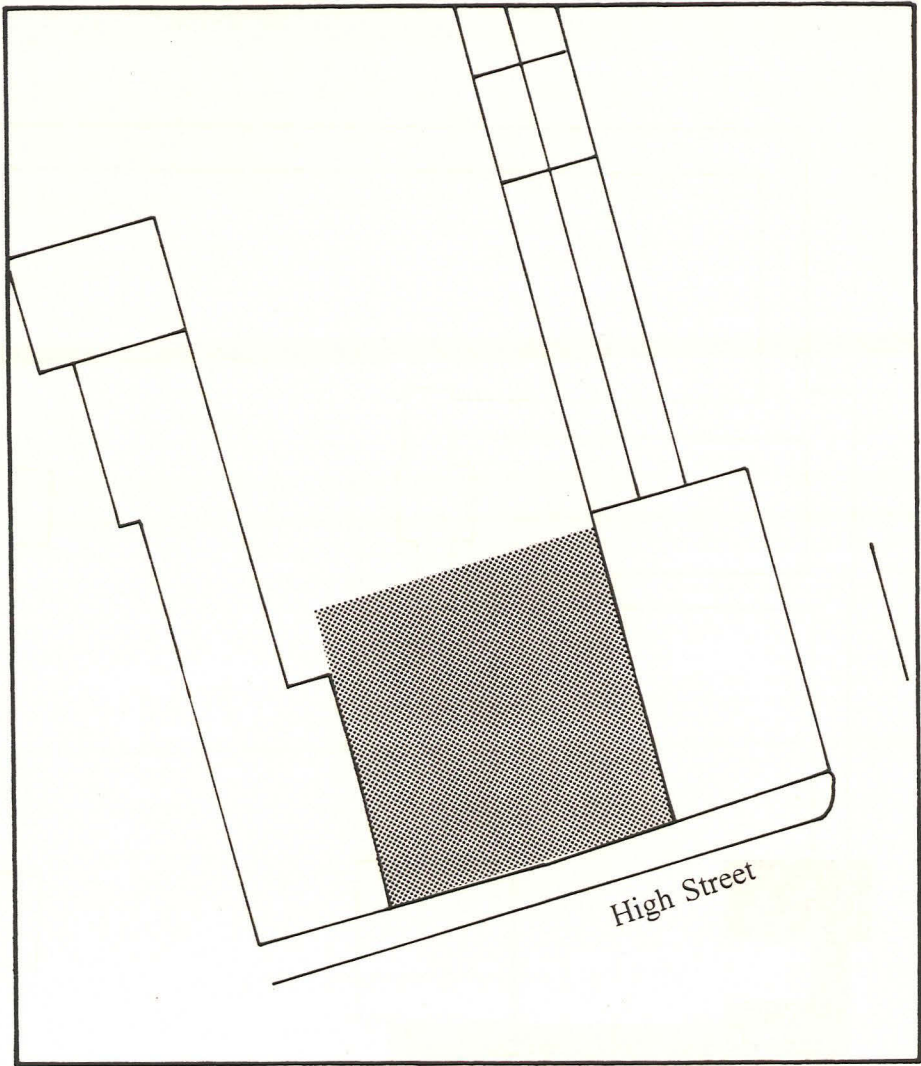
Fig. 1 General Location Plan

Fig. 2 Site Location Plan



Area of Development

Fig. 3 Area of Development




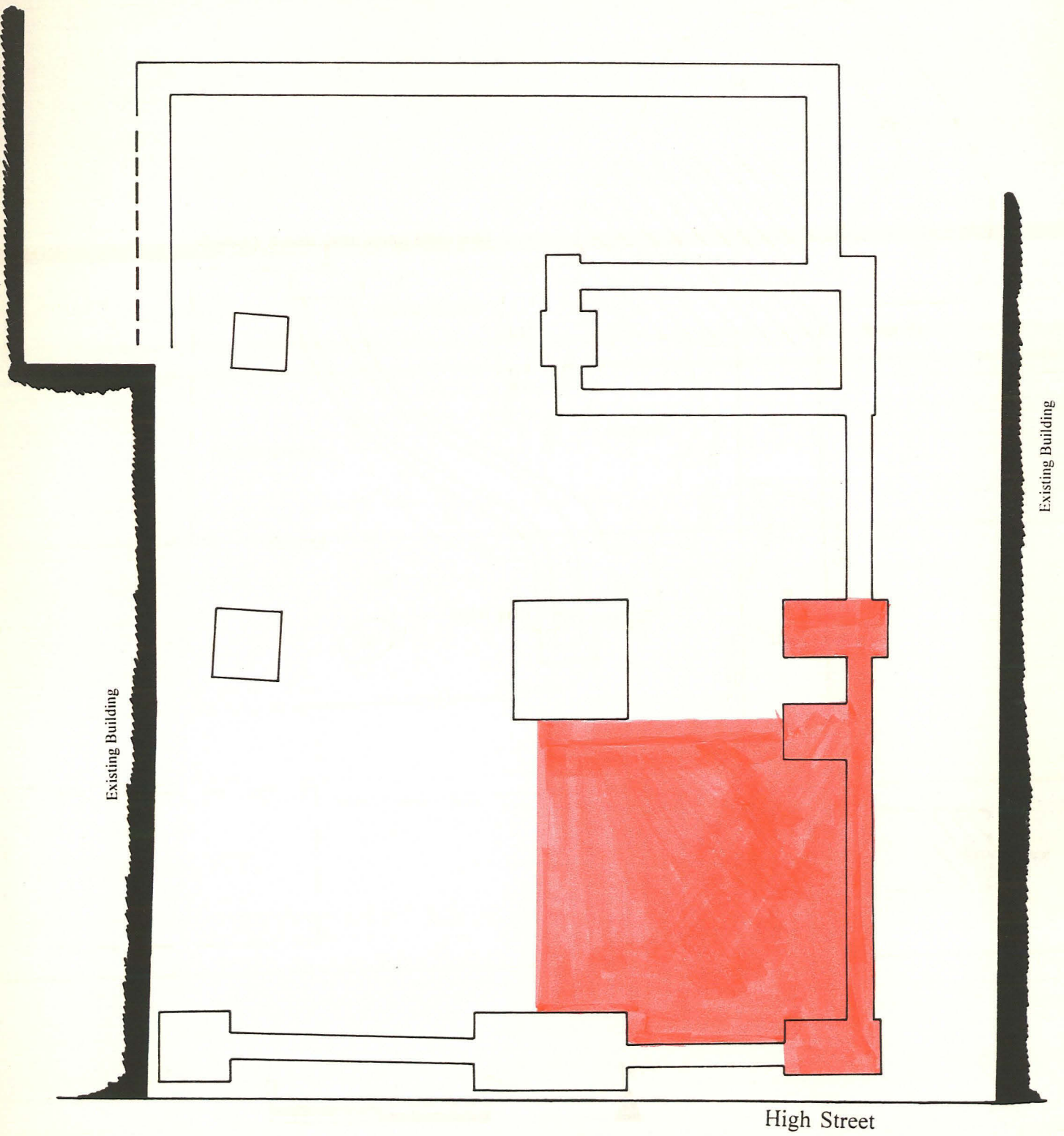
 Area of Development

Fig. 4 Development Plan



Area of Examined Archaeology

Fig. 5 Plan of Examined Archaeology

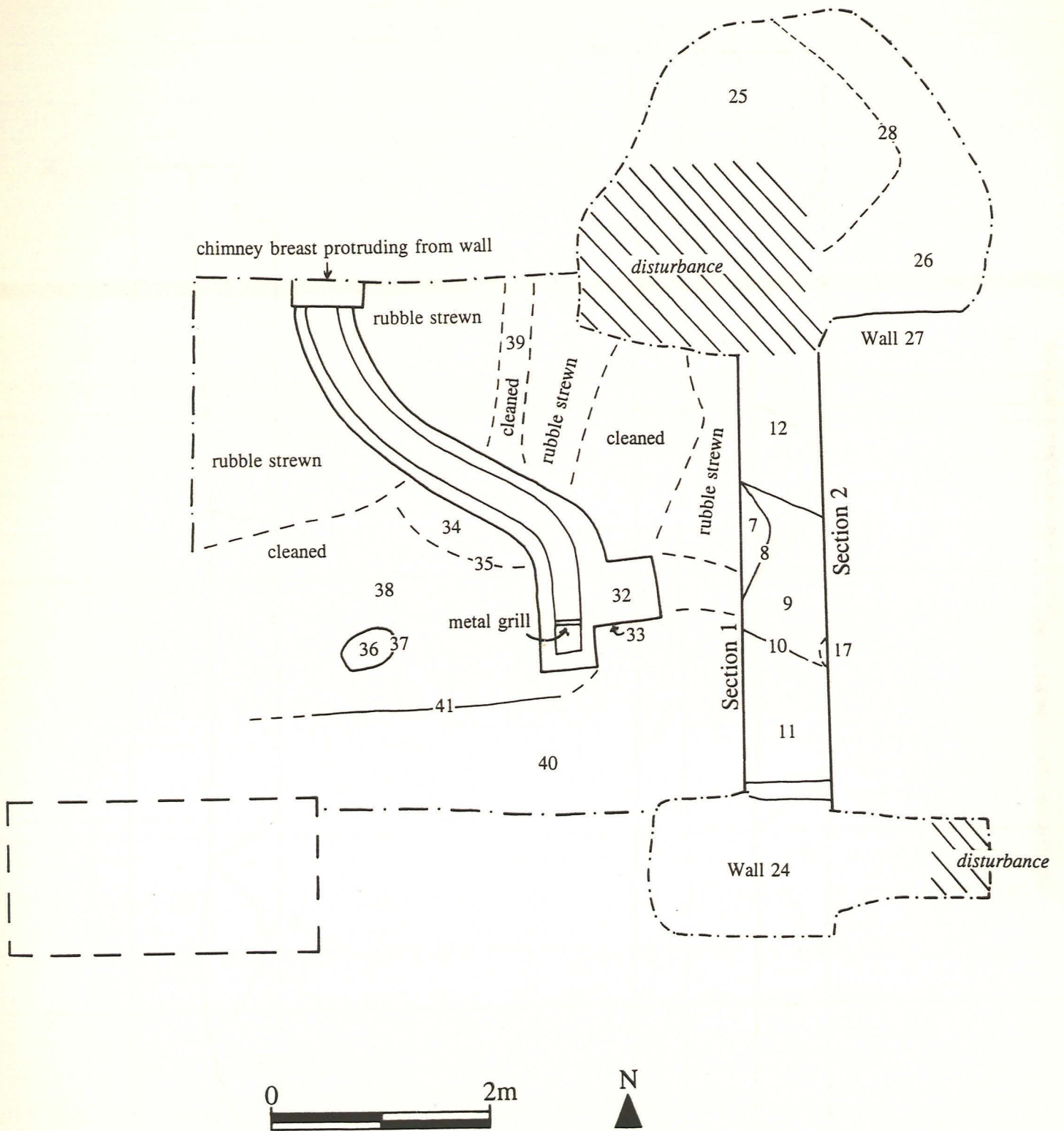
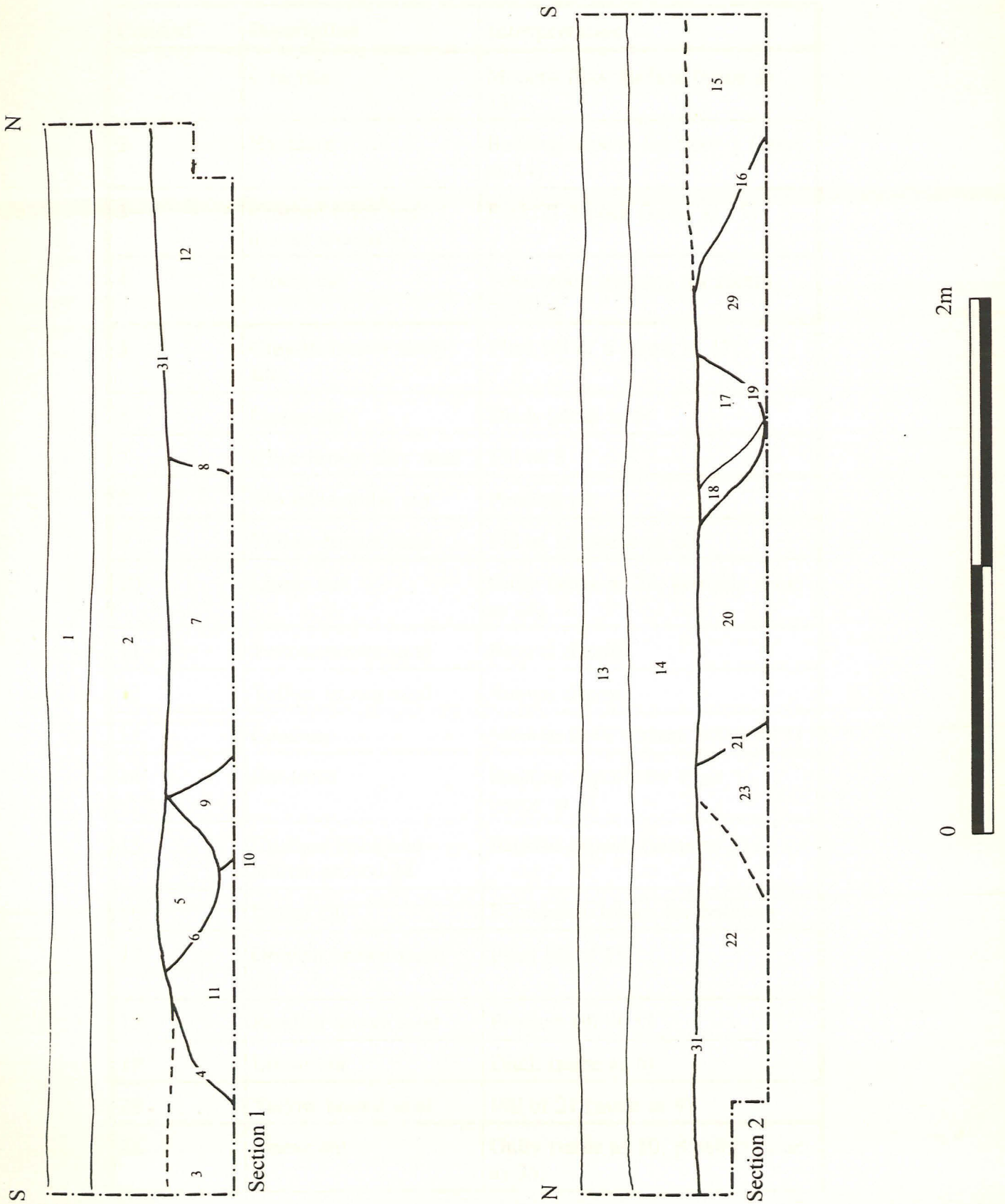


Fig. 6 Sections 1 and 2



APPENDIX 1

Context Summary

Context	Description	Interpretation
1	Concrete	Modern floor surface (same as 13)
2	Hardcore	Bedding deposit for floor 1 (same as 14)
3	Crushed brick and mortar around 24	Backfill deposit (same as 15)
4	Linear cut	Foundation trenches for recent building
5	Greyish brown sandy silt	Final fill of 6 (same as 17)
6	Linear cut	Ditch (same as 6)
7	Olive brown silty sand	Fill of 8
8	Sub rectangular cut	Possible pit
9	Yellow brown sand	Fill of 10 (same as 20)
10	Linear cut	Gully (same as 21; possibly same as 35)
11	Yellow brown sand	Natural deposit
12	Yellow brown sand	Natural deposit
13	Concrete	Modern floor surface (same as 1)
14	Hardcore	Bedding deposit for floor 13 (same as 2)
15	Crushed brick and mortar around 24	Backfill deposit (same as 3)
16	Linear cut	Foundation trench for building
17	Greyish brown sandy silt	Final fill of 19
18	Reddish brown sand	Primary fill of 19
19	Linear cut	Ditch (same as 6)
20	Yellow brown sand	Fill of 21 (same as 9)
21	Linear cut	Gully (same as 10; possibly same as 35)

22	Yellow brown sand	Natural deposit
23	Yellow brown sand	Natural deposit
24	Brick wall	Foundations for recent buildings
25	Grey mortar	Fill of 28
26	Yellow brown sand	Natural deposit
27	Brick wall	Foundations for recent building
28	Sub-rectangular cut	Possible pit
29	Yellow brown sand	Natural deposit
30	Linear cut	Foundation trench for building
31	Truncated horizon	Recent demolition event
32	Curvilinear brick duct	Flue for fireplace, fill of 33
33	Curvilinear cut	Construction trench for 32
34	Brown sand with frequent stone fragments	Fill of 35
35	Possible linear cut, over 1.5m long, over 0.4m wide	Gully? (?same as 10 and 21)
36	Grey sand	Fill of 37
37	Oval cut, 0.5m x 0.35m, unexcavated	Posthole
38	Yellow brown sand	Natural deposit
39	Light brown sand	Natural deposit
40	Grey clay with frequent mortar fragments	Foundation deposit, fill of 41
41	East-west linear cut, 11m long, over 1m wide	Foundation trench for 40

APPENDIX 2

The Archive

The archive consists of:

- 41 Context records
 - 1 Photographic record
 - 4 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: 178:94
A.P.S. Project Code: HHS94