

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT:  
15-17 UPGATE LOUTH, LINCOLNSHIRE**

Site Code: UPLO 05  
NGR: SK3271 8634  
Planning ref.: N/105/00553/05  
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Report prepared for HJW Developments Ltd.

by

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### Summary

- *An archaeological watching brief took place at 15-17, Uppgate Louth, Lincolnshire during the ground works for the construction of an extension to an existing restaurant.*
- *Although the site is located within the medieval core of the town there were no deposits identified could be attributed to this period.*
- *Evidence of stone building remains were recorded but these could not be dated. The stones appear to have derived from an earlier structure.*

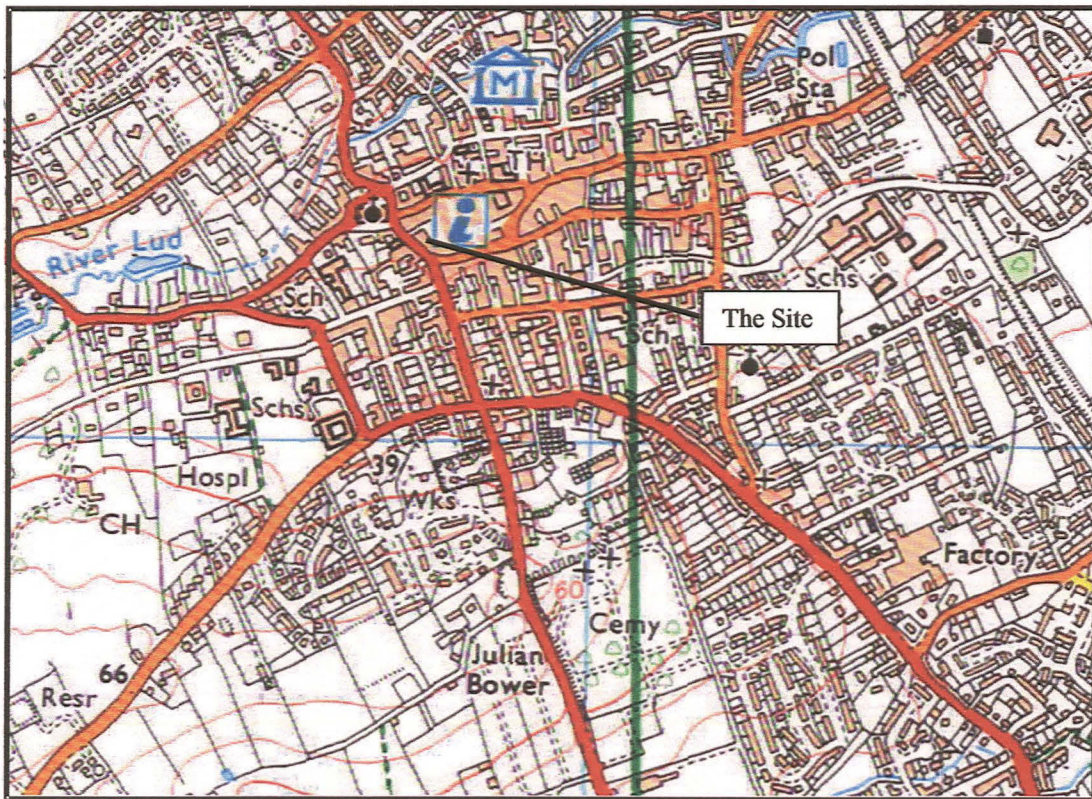


Fig 1: General location map at scale 1:25 000 (O.S. copyright licence no. AL 515 21 A0001)





## **2.0 Site Location and Description**

Louth is a market town in the Lincolnshire Wolds, approximately 38km east-north-east of central Lincoln, in the administrative district of East Lindsey. The site is located in the historic core of the town, on the east side of Upgate and south east of St James church.

## **3.0 Geological Background**

Louth is centered on the 30m contour, on eastern edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds. The drift geology consists of deposits of glacial till with bands of alluvium, sand and gravel.

## **4.0 Planning Background**

Full planning permission has been granted by East Lindsey District Council for the construction of an extension to the existing property at 15-17 Upgate Louth (ref. N/105/00553/05). This was subject to the implementation of an archaeological watching brief to monitor ground works carried out during development.

## **5.0 Archaeological and Historical Background**

Prehistoric activity from Louth is poorly understood, although there are a number of artifacts that can be dated to the Neolithic and Bronze Age periods, evidenced by stone axes, flint arrow heads, Beaker pottery and bronze metal work.

There is no recorded evidence pertaining to the Romano-British occupation of the area.

The earliest documentary evidence for the town comes from the Anglo Saxon Chronicles, where it is mentioned that in 790 AD, Abbot Aethelheard of a monastery at Louth became Archbishop of Canterbury (Garmonsway, 1992). Anglo Saxon occupation is further confirmed by pottery from the site of the Marquis of Granby public house on Eastgate (Tann, 1996). Three small long brooches were also discovered in the area (Leahy in Vince (ed), 1993).

By the time of the Domesday Survey of 1086, Louth (recorded as *Ludes*), had a population of approximately 600 and possessed a market and possibly a mint (Sawyer 1998). During the Medieval Period, the wool and cloth trade allowed the town to prosper, resulting in the construction of public buildings including a leper hospital and the church of St James.

The few archaeological investigations in the area suggest that the current site lies within the core of medieval settlement activity, evidenced by medieval burials from the north end of Upgate and medieval buildings on Eastgate.



## 6.0 Methodology

This work involved the monitoring of all intrusive groundworks, which included the removal by hand of all hard core and demolition deposits and the hand digging of foundations trenches.

All exposed surfaces were cleaned to determine the stratigraphic sequence and where necessary, archaeological features examined to determine depth, profile, orientation, and function.

Recording was carried out using pro-forma sheets with drawings of plans at a scale of 1:50 and sections at 1:20.

A colour photographic archive was compiled as work progressed, examples of which are appended to this report.

## 7.0 Results

The natural geology underlying the site consists of mid brown orange clay sand with occasional flecks of chalk (1005). This was exposed at a depth of approximately 0.80m in the north section (Fig 5:) and 0.92m in the east section (Fig 6:). Overlying the natural geology was a layer of re-deposited dark grey silty clay (1004) (Figs 5: and 6). This also contained flecks of chalk within its matrix.

Cutting this layer was context [1007] (Fig 5:). The profile of the cut was only evident in the north section (Fig 5:) initially suggesting that it may have been a pit. However, the feature contained backfilled mid grey brown silty clay with inclusions of medium-large pieces of chalk rubble (1006) (Fig 5 Plate 3:) indicating that it may have functioned as a soak-away.

Sealing (1006) was a leveling layer of re-deposited natural (1003). This comprised light brown silty clay with moderate chalk flecks. Cut into (1003) was building foundation (1013). The cut [1014] for this feature is not immediately obvious in section (Plate 6:) although it was discernable in plan.

The building foundation was orientated east-west (Fig 4:) and consisted of re-used blocks of worked limestone (Plate 2:) sitting on a lime mortar bed (1015). The blocks were multi-faceted with an average measurement of 0.40m x 0.30m x 0.17m thick, with one exception measuring 0.75m x 0.40m x 0.17m thick. This had a semi-circular cut on one edge (Plate 6:).

A layer of buried topsoil (1002) sealed (1013) and above this was the remnants of a brick structure (1012) (Fig 6: Plate 4:). This consisted of three courses of stretcher bond, bonded with a lime mortar mix. The structure was orientated north-south and can probably be placed within a 19<sup>th</sup> century context.

Context (1001) was a leveling layer of demolition rubble overlain by a yard surface (1011) of York stone flags (Plate 1:). This yard surface was sealed by modern concrete (1010). This formed the uppermost layer of the site.

Cutting the modern concrete (1010) was the cut for a man-hole [1009]. This was filled with dark brown black clay silt (1008).

## **8.0 Discussion and Conclusion**

Although the site lies within the medieval core of the town there were no deposits that can be securely dated to this period. This was due to the lack of stratified pottery from any of the contexts. There were stratigraphical relationships however, that provided an insight into the build up of the site.

The earliest phase of activity on the site was (1004) a layer of re-deposited natural used for ground-raising. This was cut by context [1007]. Although the morphology of [1007] was indeterminate, the deliberately back-filled nature of the fill (1006) with the chalk rubble inclusions, suggests that it may have functioned as a soak-away for an earlier building.

Prior to the construction of wall foundation (1013) a second phase of leveling occurred evidenced by context (1003).

The worked stones that formed foundation (1013) are possibly re-used from a building of some status but their original function is not immediately apparent. The construction cut [1014] was not discernable, except by the footprint of mortar -bedding layer (1015). Orientated east-west, the foundation extended beyond the limits of excavation.

The naturally accumulated layer of buried topsoil (1002) sealing foundation (1013) appears to characterize a period of abandonment on the site.

Following this apparent hiatus of activity was the construction of brick structure (1012). Only three course of stretcher bond were evident so the function of the structure could not be determined. However, as it ran parallel to the street frontage and extended over the existing property division, it may be an out building associated with an earlier phase of development on the site.

A final phase of ground raising occurred evidenced by a layer of demolition rubble. This formed the base for a yard surface constructed from York stone flags. A layer of modern concrete sealed the stone yard surface.

Cutting the modern concrete was a manhole [1009].



## 9.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

The methodology chosen to investigate this development has proven to be an appropriate level of archaeological monitoring. It allowed for the appraisal of any archaeological contexts present and did not have any detrimental impact upon the progress of construction works for the client.

## 10.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology would like to thank HJW Developments Ltd for this commission and for the groundworkers for their co-operation.

## 11.0 References

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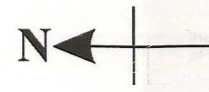
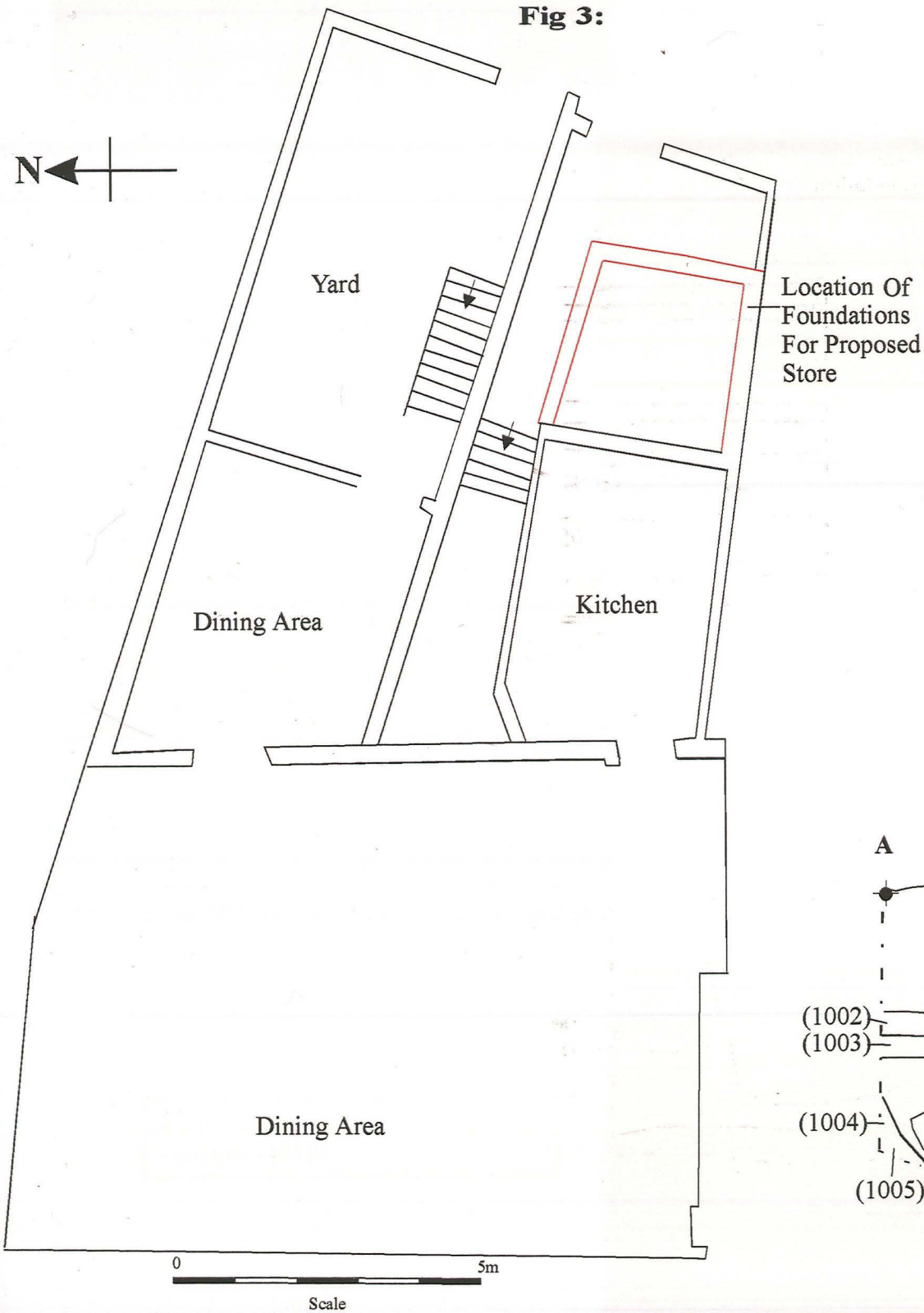
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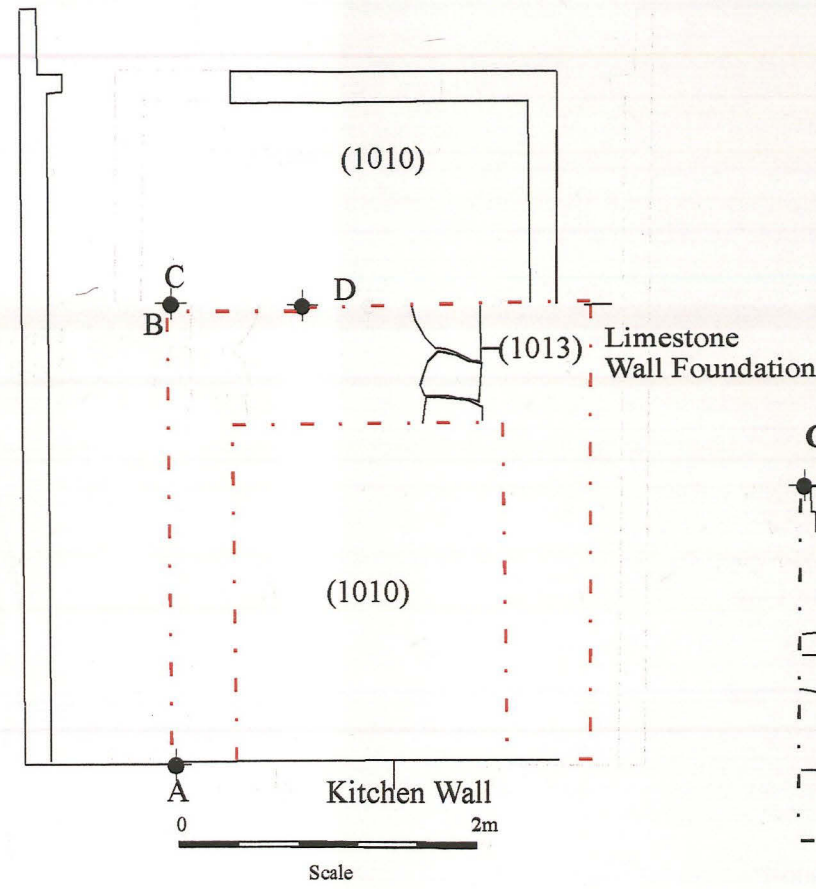
## 12.0 The Site Archive

The primary records for the site are currently in the possession of Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln). The paper and photographic element of this report will be deposited with Lincoln City and County Museum within six months.

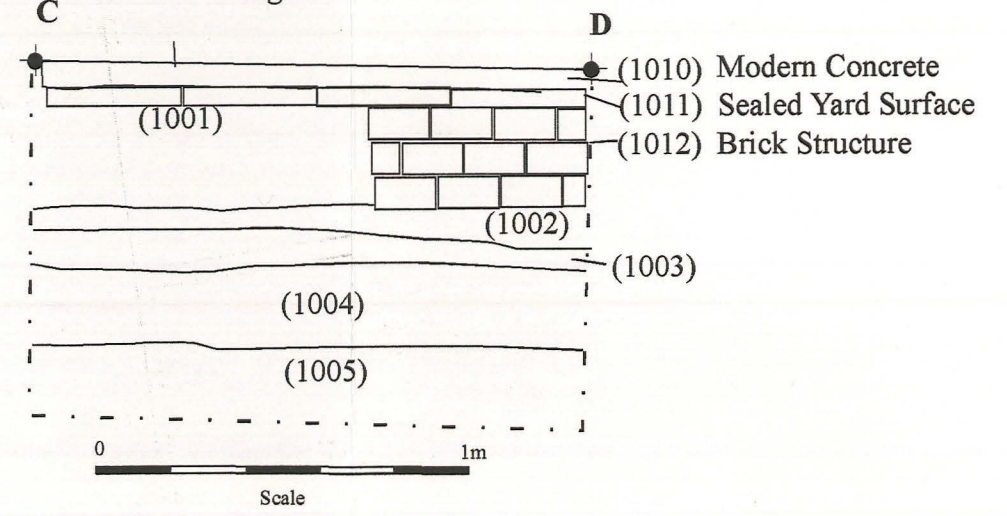




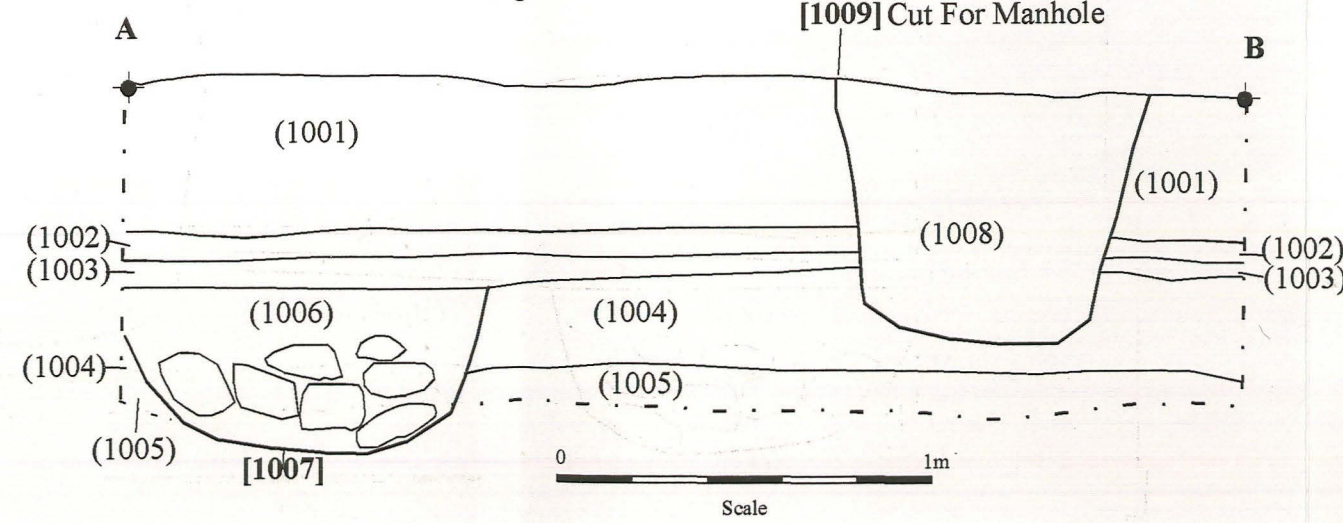
**Fig 4:**



**Fig 6:**



**Fig 5:**



- Fig 3:** Plan of foundation trench
- Fig 4:** Plan of excavated foundations
- Fig 5:** North Section
- Fig 6:** East Section



Appendix 1: Colour Plates



Plate 1: East Section showing sealed York stone yard surface

Plate 2: Limestone wall foundation (1013)

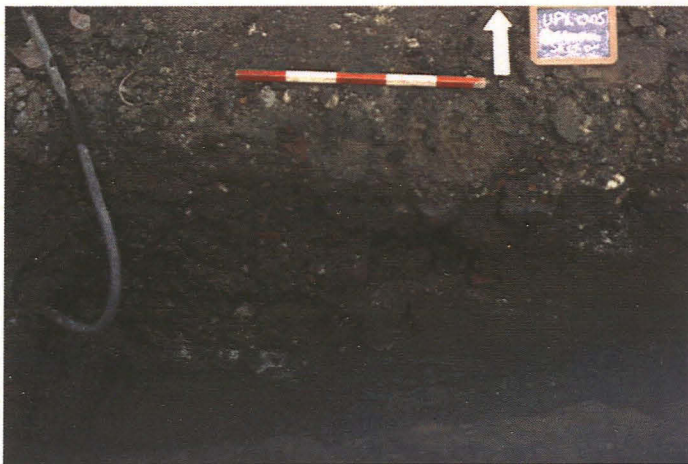


Plate 3: North Section showing possible soak-away

Plate 4: East Section showing brick structure (1012)





Appendix 1: Colour Plates



**Plate 5:** Worked stone from foundation (1013)



**Plate 6:** Stone foundation (1013) visible in west section



## Appendix 2 Context Summary List

Context Number	Category	Description
1000		Unstratified
1001	Layer	Demolition Rubble
1002	Layer	Buried Topsoil
1003	Layer	Light brown silty clay with moderate chalk flecks
1004	Layer	Dark grey silty clay with moderate chalk flecks
1005	Natural	Mid brown orange clay sand with occasional chalk flecks
1006	Fill	Mid grey brown clay silt with occasional pieces of chalk
1007	Cut	Cut of possible soak-away
1008	Fill	Dark brown black clay silt
1009	Cut	Cut for man-hole
1010	Layer	Modern concrete
1011	Layer	York stone yard surface
1012	Structure	Brick structure
1013	Structure	Limestone wall foundation
1014	Cut	Cut for wall foundation (1013)
1015	Layer	Mortar bedding for (1013)