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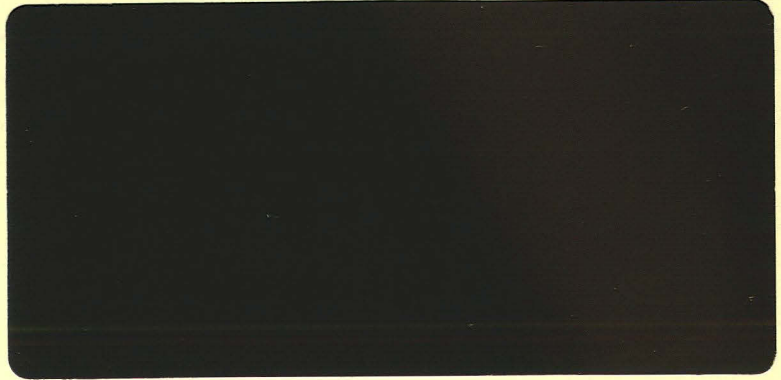
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
FOR A DEVELOPMENT AT  
SEA ROAD,  
CHAPEL ST. LEONARDS,  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
(CSR 95)**



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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
FOR A DEVELOPMENT AT  
SEA ROAD,  
CHAPEL ST. LEONARDS,  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
(CSR 95)**

Work Undertaken For  
Mr P. Leivers

October 1995

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## 1. SUMMARY

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the construction of a single dwelling house and detached garage on land adjacent to Sea Road, Chapel St. Leonards. The watching brief monitored the excavation of the foundations.*

*Development at Sea Road affects an area containing Romano-British (c. A.D. 50-400) and medieval (c. A.D. 1066-1500) activity. Romano-British and medieval pottery has been recovered from the town and its coastline, an area that is subject to quite severe coastal erosion.*

*The earliest archaeological activity is evidenced by an early Bronze Age flint dagger, recovered from the seafront. Iron Age (c. 500 B.C.- A.D. 50) and Roman industrial sites are suspected within close proximity to the site of the development. Between Chapel Point and Ingoldmells a number of salt-making sites have been revealed by tidal erosion on the beach. Saltern sites are known to the south of Chapel St. Leonards and at both Addelethorpe and Hogsthorpe, suggesting significant exploitation of the marine environment during this period.*

*A medieval settlement has been located on land adjacent to the development, revealed as a series of earthworks during aerial reconnaissance (NGR TF 553722). Known by the 16th century as Mumby Chapel, the original village church was destroyed by the sea in 1571 A.D. The church was restored and used until the present church was constructed in 1794 A.D., within c. 250m of the proposed development.*

*Although a significant proportion of the archaeology had been disturbed by modern development, archaeological remains from the Romano-British and medieval periods were recovered. These layers contained*

*finds dating to the 2nd century A.D. Disturbed modern topsoil provided the present ground surface.*

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Background

On the 13th and 14th September 1995, an archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the construction of a new house and garage (Application number S/031/0906/95) on land adjacent to Sea Road, Chapel St. Leonards, Lincolnshire (NGR TF 552722). The work was commissioned by Mr P. Leivers, and was carried out by Archaeological Project Services in accordance with a brief set by the Assistant County Archaeologist.

### 2.2 Topography and Geology

Chapel St. Leonards is situated on the east coast of Lincolnshire c. 30km east of Horncastle and c. 36km northeast of Boston. The development is located c. 250m north of Chapel St. Leonard's village centre, as defined by the 18th century church. The site and the surrounding area are very flat, lying at approximately 3m O.D. Local soils are the Wallasea 2 Association, an extensive marine alluvium across the reclaimed marshlands of Lincolnshire. The topography is generally level, but there are occasional ridges on the sites of former creeks. The soils are mainly pelo-alluvial gley soils (Hodge *et al.*, 1984, 338).

### 2.3 Archaeological Setting

Sea Road is located in an area of archaeological activity dating from the Romano-British to the medieval period. Iron Age and Romano-British salt production formed the economic basis for the early exploitation of the coastline, with



numerous sites having been located and recorded (*Whitwell, 1970, 75; 92; 117*). The nearest recorded saltern is *c.* 5 km away from the development, at the junction adjoining the Addlethorpe to Hogsthorpe road (NGR TF 552713).

Evidence for activity from the period of Anglo-Scandinavian migration and conquest (*c.* A.D. 400-1066) is very limited, the original medieval church having been replaced by an 18th century re-build (*Pevsner and Harris, 1989, 219*). Place-name evidence suggests that continuity can be expected from the end of the Romano-British period. The earliest recorded name of the settlement is Mumby Chapel (*ibid, 219*), Mumby translating from the Old Scandinavian as Mundi's By, or the village of Mundi's people. (*Ekwall, 1974, 334*).

The remains of a suspected medieval settlement have been located by aerial reconnaissance in close proximity to the area of development (*I. George pers comm*). Along the Chapel St. Leonard's coastline there have been several finds of medieval pottery, presumably dislodged by the action of coastal erosion (*Hurst, 1984, 64*). This suggests that an unknown proportion of medieval archaeology may already have been lost through natural processes.

### 3. AIMS

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

### 4. METHODS

Trenches were excavated to a depth of 1.85m using a mechanical excavator. The sides of the trenches were then cleaned

and examined to identify any archaeological features. 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 sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20 and plans were drawn at a scale of 1:50. Locations of drawn sections appear in Figure 4.

## 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 Roman/medieval deposits
- Phase 3 Modern deposits

### Phase 1 Natural Deposits

Exposed across the area of the development was a layer of firm reddish-orange silty clay (006, 022, 026, 028, 030 and 033). These deposits were not excavated to their lowest extent, but formed a stratum that was a minimum of 1m thick. Overlying these within the southern area of the site was a light yellow-orange silty clay (011).

### Phase 2 Roman and Medieval Deposits

Archaeological activity from both periods was recorded overlying the natural deposits. Although a significant quantity of Romano-British and medieval finds were retrieved, the nature of their recovery prevented a direct association with the archaeological deposits. A finds strategy



relating the object to a particular section, rather than a specific context, proved a more viable solution. The results of this methodology strongly suggest that the archaeological deposits from the two periods are located between sections 1-8, within the southern and eastern extent of the development.

The earliest layers form a series of horizontal bands, observed in section. A very distinct yellow sandy silt (005) containing flecks of red tile formed one of the first horizons of activity, dated on the basis of pottery to the 14th century. A deposit of identical composition (004) containing a single bone fragment and moderate charcoal flecking appears in the adjacent section (2).

A silty sand with moderate tile and charcoal flecking (003) directly overlay (005). Pottery from this context had a secure 13th-14th century date, including a significant portion of a pantheon of Toynton-All-Saints origin. This deposit had been truncated by a steep-sided cut with a narrow base, aligned roughly northwest to southeast (017). Interpreted as a ditch, this feature contained two main fills (016) and (007). A single fragment of Roman greyware was retrieved from (007).

The ditch (017) had cut a series of archaeological deposits to the west. These layers formed a series of silty clays (018, 008, 009, 010) containing fragments of animal bone, oyster shell and medieval pottery. The earliest deposit of this sequence (018) formed a distinctive mid-brown silty clay that stretched across most of the western extent of the development, identical to (012). Pottery from (018) included 1 piece of Roman pottery and 3 medieval fragments dated to the 14th/15th centuries.

Both (012) and (018) were truncated by a later feature running from northeast to southwest, with steep and regular sides (013). An identical profile was exposed within section 15 (025), suggesting that the feature, interpreted as a ditch, has a minimum length of c. 3m. No finds were recovered from the ditch fills (014), (015) or (024) thus dating of (013) is uncertain.

### **Phase 3 Modern Deposits**

A series of modern layers had sealed the activity of the previous periods. The finds from these contexts included a variety of plastics, refuse and construction material; none of these were retained. This recent activity had removed the earlier archaeological deposits towards the northern extent of the development.

The earliest deposit (002) of this phase was composed of a variable orange-brown silty clay, containing flecks of charcoal. This had been overlain by a firm dark brown clay (001) that extended across the majority of the area outlined for development (figure. 2).

The latest recorded event was interpreted as the cut for a steep-sided foundation trench (040), which had then been infilled by a large quantity of light orange clay (021) and sizeable 10-25cm limestone fragments (020).

Excavation of the pillar and chimney foundations confirmed the presence of modern disturbance across the central and northern sectors of the development.

## **6. DISCUSSION**

The silty clays (006, 011, 022, 026, 028, 030 and 033) exposed across the whole of the site had formed as a result of natural alluvial deposition.



Romano-British and medieval deposits (Phase 2) represent a sequence of activity and occupation, though it was not possible to securely date many of these layers. The earliest activity is interrupted by the introduction of two ditches (013 and 017), that have diverging alignments. The ditches represent the final phase of activity during this period, and may have been used as boundary markers or drainage channels.

The modern deposits (Phase 3) illustrate the piecemeal occupation of the site following the phase 2 activity. Some attempt has been made to construct a hardcore surface (020), possibly for the use of vehicles, whilst the rest of the site has remained redundant (001). The construction of neighbouring properties has caused considerable disturbance and has resulted in the re-deposition of excavated natural and topsoils (021), (002). A significant quantity of refuse has accumulated on the site during this phase.

### 6.1 Faunal Assemblage

A preliminary analysis of the faunal assemblage has determined the presence of all three major domesticates (cow, sheep and pig), with sheep probably the most common. A single sheep/goat horn core was recovered and a few of the sheep bones displayed marks of dog gnawing. There appears to be an over-abundance of jaw bones and teeth, with several sheep and pig mandibles and a dog jaw identified. Teeth size and wear indicates that about half of the represented domesticates (pig and sheep) were quite mature. This suggests that at least some of the sheep were kept primarily for wool. Several bird and rabbit bones were also retrieved.

### 6.2 Marine Assemblage

Of the molluscs recovered, the Oyster (*Ostrea edulis* L.) was the most plentiful (14 examples). Many of the shells were uniform in size, being 5-6cm (average 5.8cm) long and between 4.5-6cm wide (average 5.3cm). Those that possess this uniform size, and shape, are probably from managed oyster beds. Supporting this suggestion is the fact that the uniform shells are free of infestation, whereas 2 of the 3 larger examples bear evidence of burrowing by parasites. Although the uniform shells are perhaps medieval or later in date some of them and, in particular, the larger examples may be Roman in date. Many of the shells are extremely worn.

In addition, 3 mussel (*Mytilus edulis* L.) shell fragments were recovered from Sections 1 and 2 and a large, worn whelk (*Buccinum* sp.) shell from sections 3-7.

### 6.3 Pottery Assemblage

The assemblage of pot suggested the possibility of a sequence of activity stretching from the Romano-British period to the 18th century. The assemblages were collected by section number (when removed by machine), or were defined as clearance if recovered from the spoilheap.

**Sections 1 - 2:** Including 1 briquetage fragment, several Romano-British greyware sherds, various 14th century Toynton-All-Saints ware fragments and a post-medieval pantile.

**Sections 3 - 7:** Various sherds, mainly 15th century Kirkstead/Toynton wares including a late 18th century plate fragment.

**Sections 8 - 9:** Single sherds of Roman Dalesware, various medieval and post-



medieval imports including some 16th century fragments.

**Clearance (+):** Various Roman and post-medieval pottery sherds

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigations at Sea Road, Chapel St. Leonard's, show a sequence of Romano-British, medieval and modern activity. The natural alluvial silty clays were superseded by several horizons of archaeological deposition. It seems likely that the Romano-British material has been disturbed and re-deposited as a result of medieval occupation within the location of the development, though the quantity and preservation of the pottery may suggest that occupation during this period was in close proximity.

The most secure dating evidence has indicated that the earliest archaeological layers may have their origins in the 13th century. Earthworks observed due south of the development may form part of the nucleus of a settlement of similar date.

The final phase of the occupation resulted in the cutting of two ditches, aligned roughly north to south. The profile of these features is similar, though both have distinctly different fills. A single sherd of Roman greyware was recovered from the uppermost fill of the easternmost ditch, though it is probable that this has been removed from its original context. Stratigraphic analysis suggests these features were cut at the end of the medieval period, either for drainage or property demarcation.

Very recent construction debris forms the latest horizon within the recorded stratigraphy, associated with the development of neighbouring properties.

The presence of significant Romano-British and medieval deposits has provided useful archaeological evidence for the location of these early settlements. An initial assessment of the archaeological data suggests that the Romano-British material has been displaced by later medieval activity in this location.

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wish to thank Mr P. Leivers for funding the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. Steve Haynes coordinated the work and David Start edited this report. Thanks to Gary Taylor for examining and reporting on the faunal and marine assemblages, and to Hilary Healey for providing a summary of the pottery. Background information was provided by the Assistant County Archaeologist Ian George and parish files maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

## 9. PERSONNEL

Project Manager: Steve Haynes  
Site Supervisor: Neil Herbert  
Illustration: Neil Herbert  
Post-excavation analyst: Neil Herbert

## 10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Pevsner, N. and Harris, J., 1989 *The Buildings of England: Lincolnshire*

Whitwell, J.B., 1970 *Roman Lincolnshire*  
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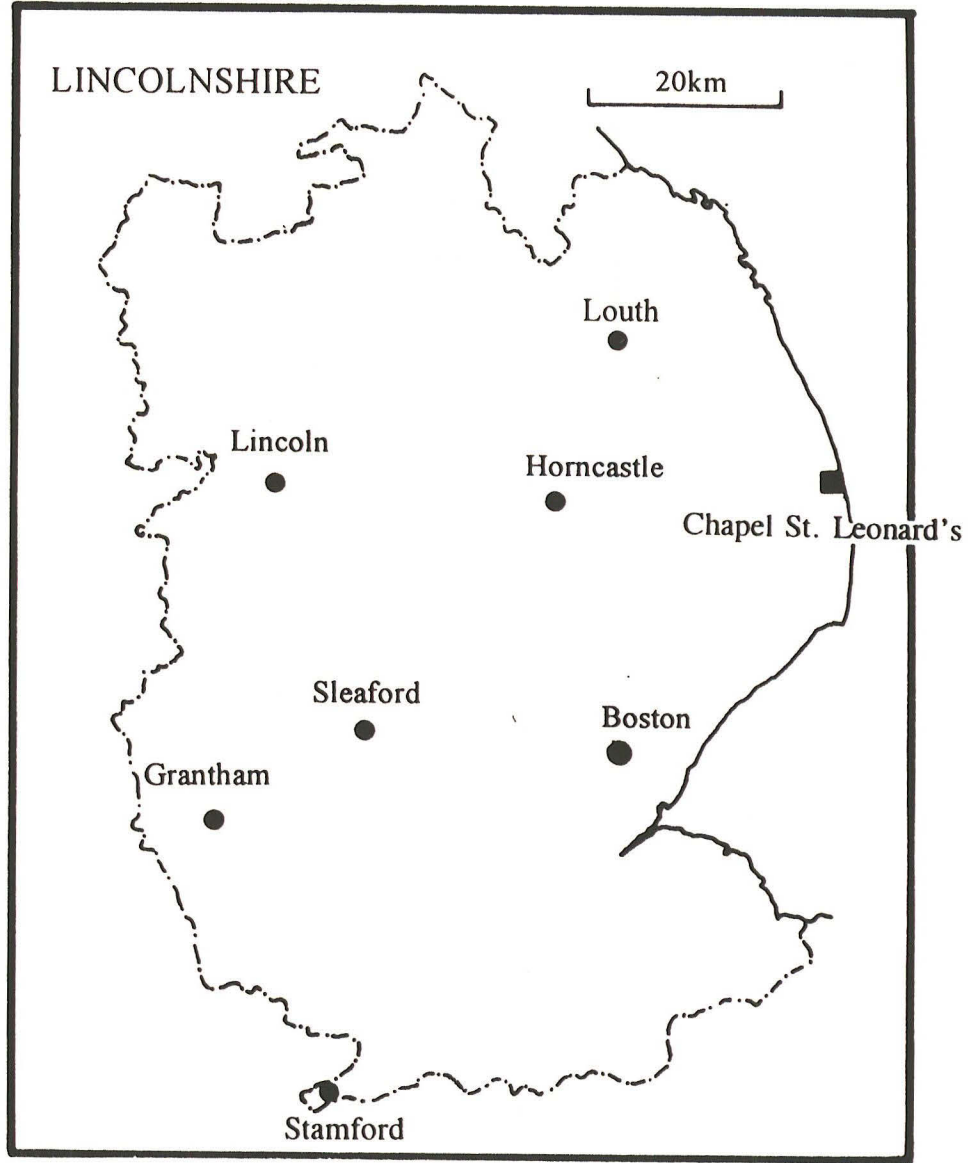
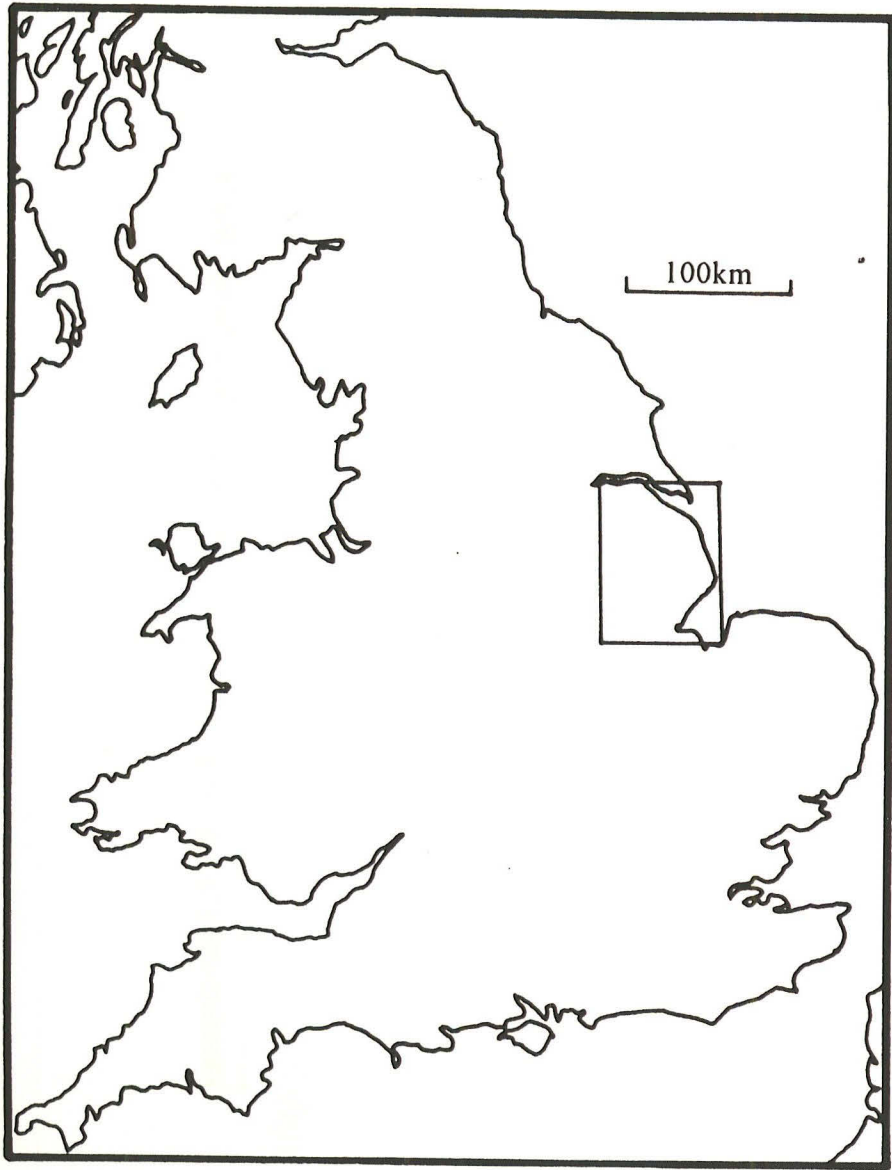
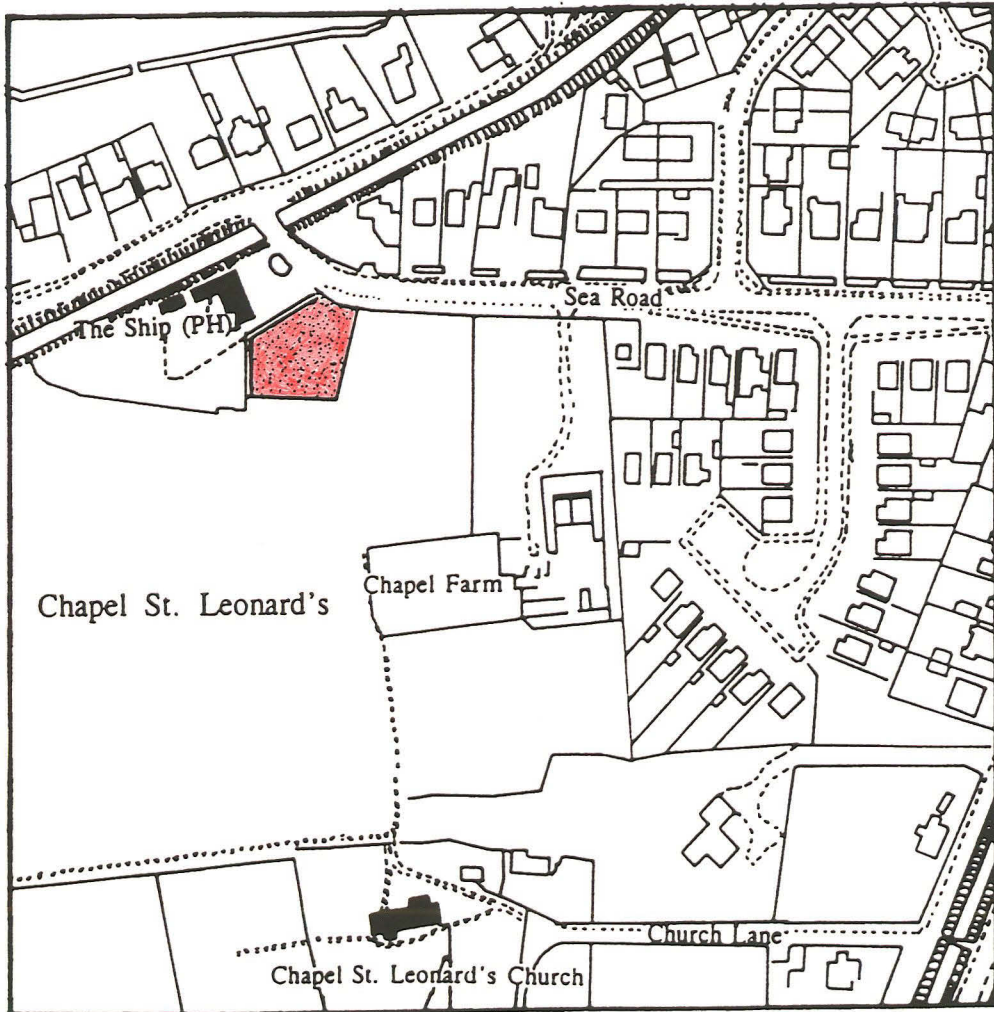


Fig. 1 General Location Plan

Figure. 2 Site Location Map



Area of Development



N



0

300m





Fig. 3 Area of Development

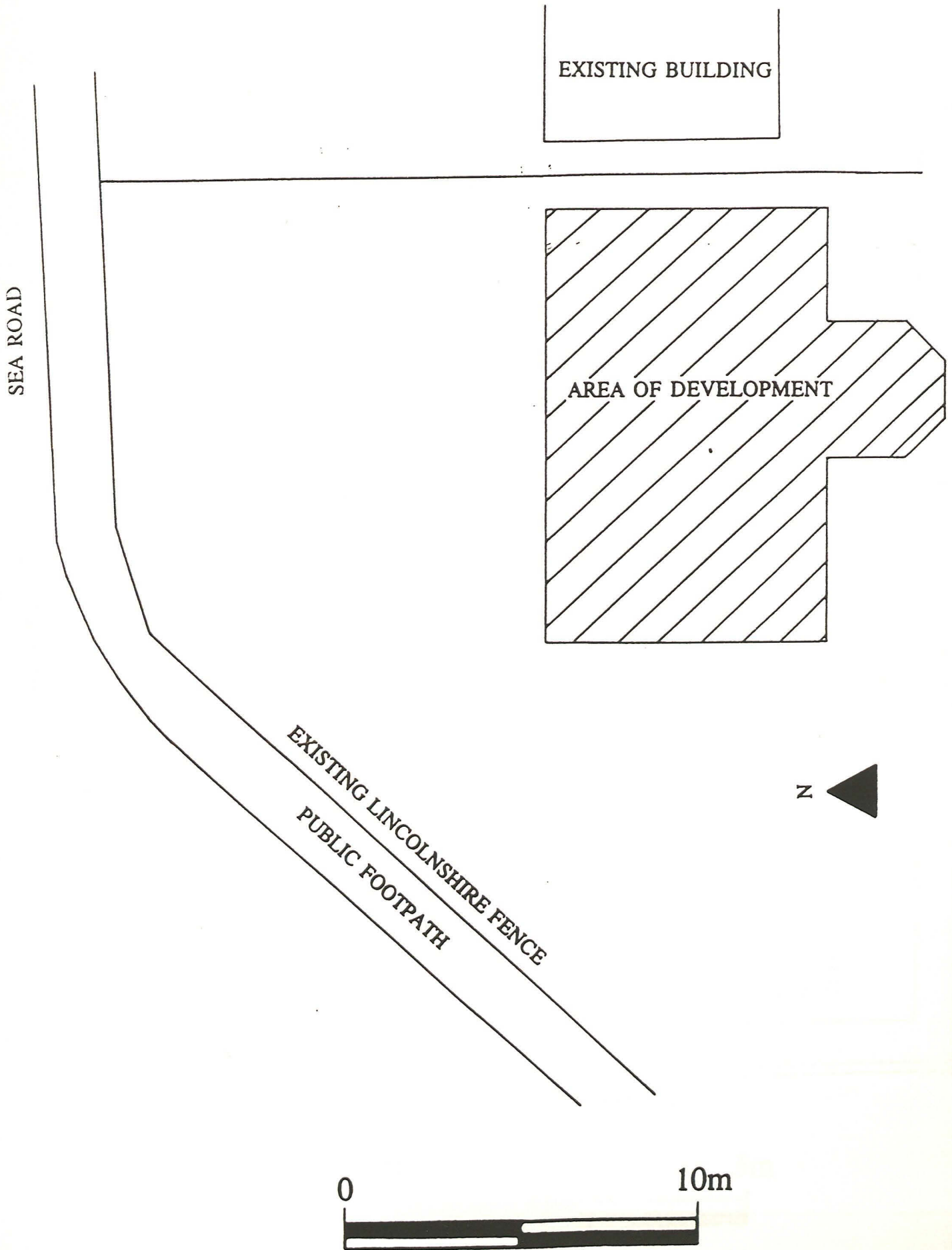


Figure. 4 Plan of the Area of Development: showing locations of features and sections

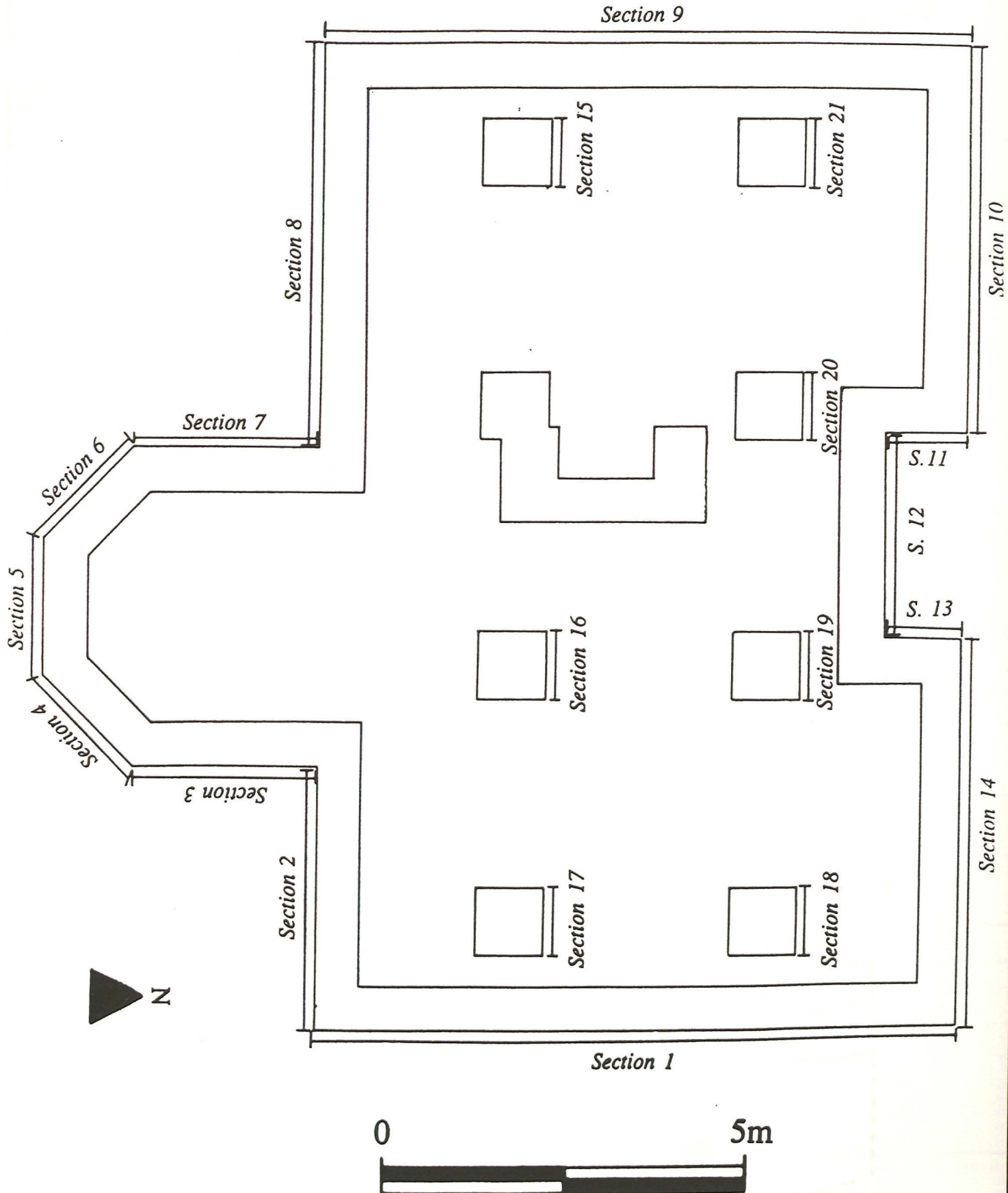


Figure. 5 Sections 1-6

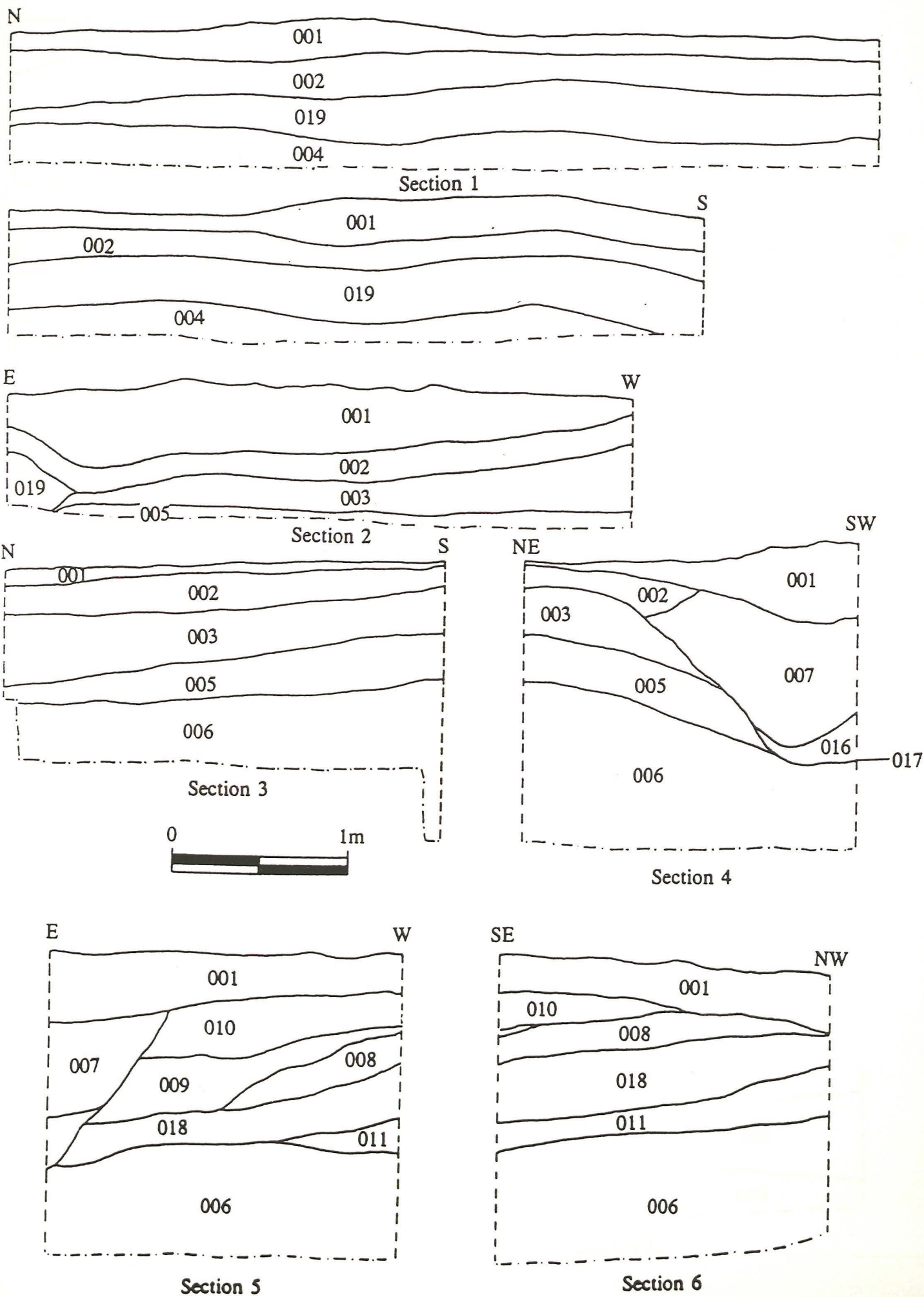
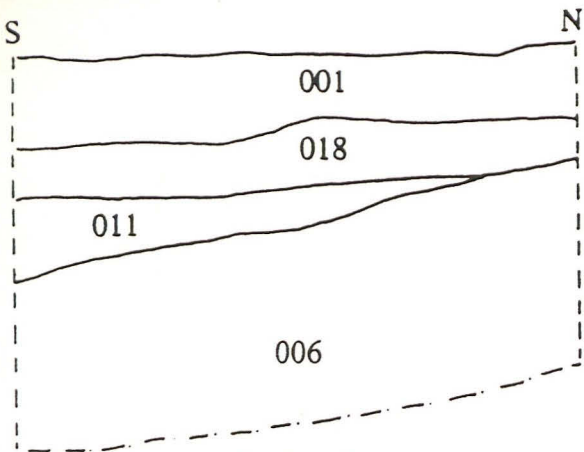
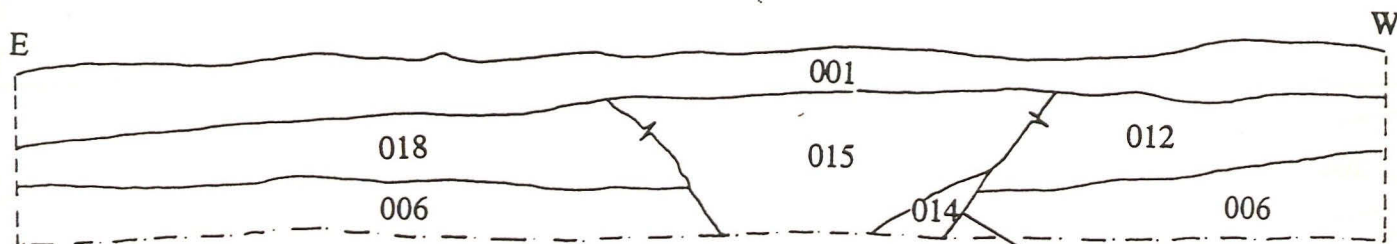




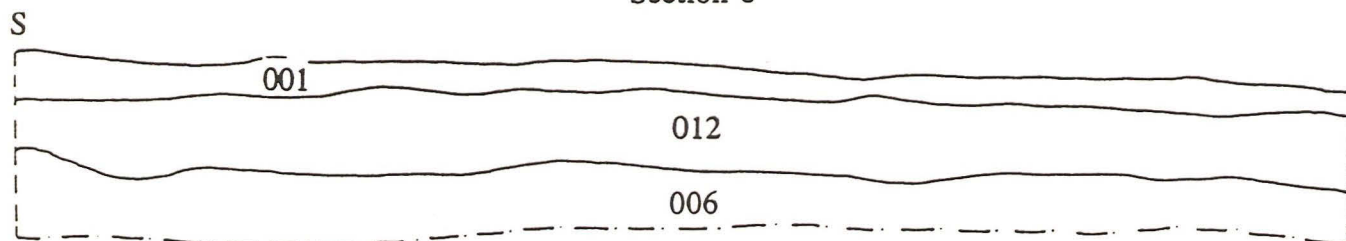
Figure. 6 Sections 7-12



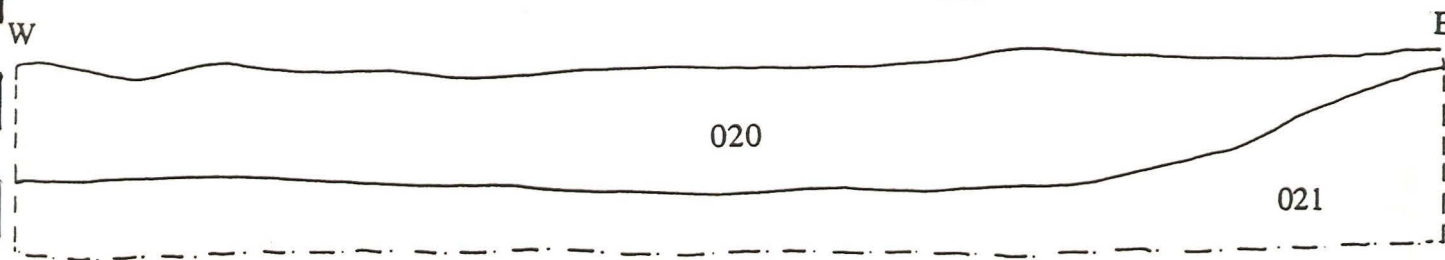
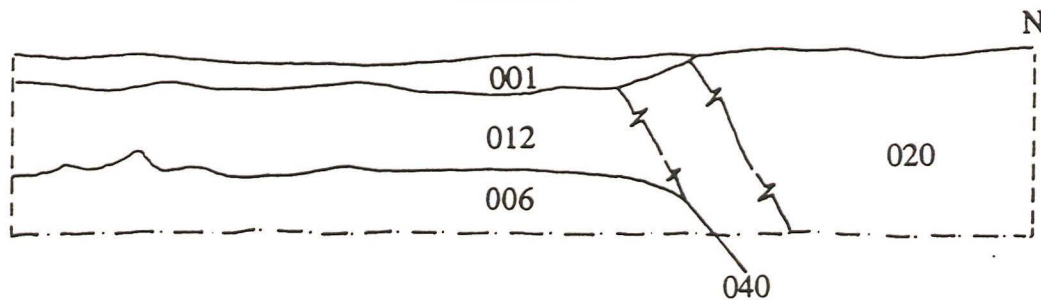
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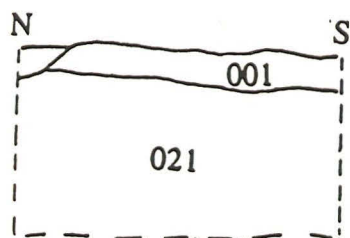
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Section 9



Section 10

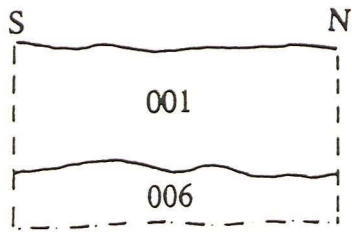


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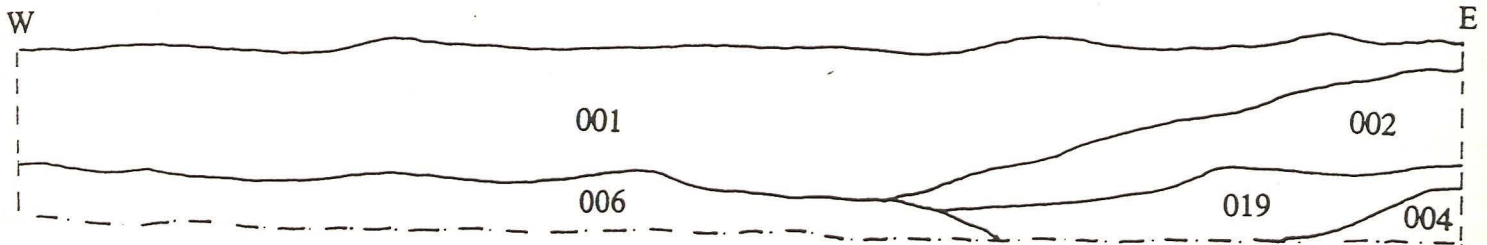


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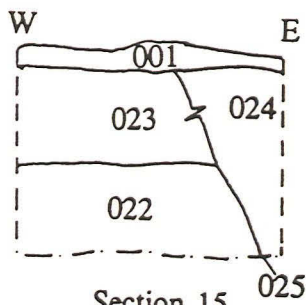
Figure. 7 Sections 13-21



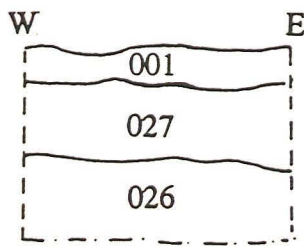
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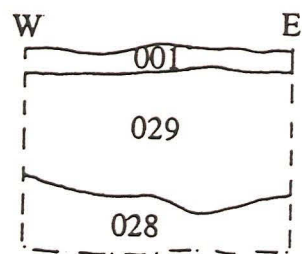
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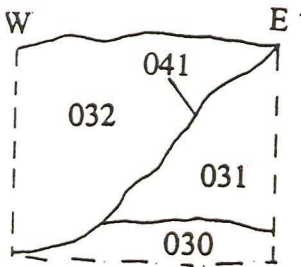
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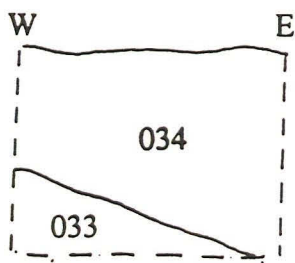
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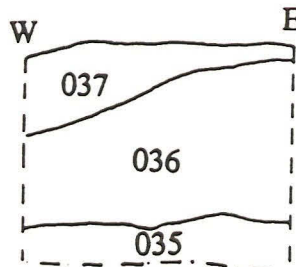
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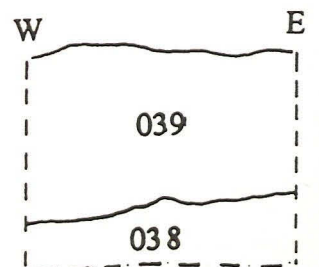
Section 18



Section 19



Section 20



Section 21



## APPENDIX 1

### Context Summary

Context	Description	Interpretation
001	Brown silty clay	Topsoil
002	Soft mixed silts/clays	Construction upcast
003	Yellow sandy silt	Occupation deposit
004	Yellow silty clay	Occupation deposit
005	Yellow sandy silt	Occupation deposit
006	Reddish-orange silty clay	Natural deposit
007	Orange clay	Fill of 017
008	Yellow silty clay	Occupation deposit
009	Mid-brown silt	Occupation deposit
010	Yellow silty clay	Buried soil
011	Yellow-orange silty clay	Natural deposit
012	Mid-brown silty clay	Occupation deposit
013	Linear steep sided cut	Ditch
014	Yellow-brown silty clay	Fill of 013
015	Mid brown silty clay	Fill of 013
016	Mid grey-brown clay	Fill of 017
017	Linear steep sided cut	Ditch
018	Green-brown silty clay	Occupation deposit
019	Dark brown silty clay	Occupation deposit
020	White limestone fragments	Hardcore surface
021	Light orange clay	Levelling deposit
022	Red-orange silty clay	Natural deposit

023	Green-brown silty clay	Occupation deposit
024	Mid brown silty clay	Fill of 025
025	Linear steep sided cut	Ditch
026	Red-orange silty clay	Natural deposit
027	Loose dark brown silt	Poss. occupation deposit
028	Yellow-brown silty clay	Natural deposit
029	Dark brown silty clay	Poss. occupation deposit
030	Yellow-brown silty clay	Natural deposit
031	Dark brown silty clay	Poss. occupation deposit
032	White limestone fragments	Hardcore surface
033	Red-orange silty clay	Natural deposit
034	Dark brown silty clay	Poss. occupation deposit
035	Loose brown silts	Disturbed soil
036	Light orange clay	Levelling deposit
037	White limestone fragments	Hardcore surface
038	Loose brown silts	Disturbed soil
039	White limestone fragments	Hardcore surface
040	Steep sided cut	Hardcore foundation trench
041	Steep sided cut	Hardcore foundation trench



## APPENDIX 2

### The Archive

The archive consists of:

- 41 . Context Records
- 24 . Photographic Records
- 22 . Scale Drawings
- 1 . . Site Matrix
- 10 . Bags of finds

All primary records are currently kept at:

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

City and County Museum Accession number	159.95
Archaeological Project Services project code	CSR 95