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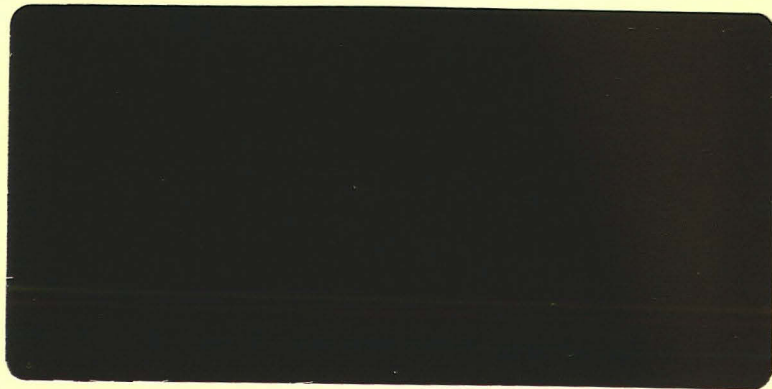
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
FOR A DEVELOPMENT AT
ST NICHOLAS CLOSE,
BOSTON,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(BNC94)**



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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
FOR A DEVELOPMENT AT
ST NICHOLAS CLOSE,
BOSTON,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(BNC94)**

Work Undertaken For
Chestnut Homes

September 1995

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1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the construction of a housing development at St Nicholas Close, Boston. The watching brief monitored the excavations for the foundations and service trenches.

Development at St Nicholas Close affects an area containing archaeological remains dating from the Romano-British (c.50-400 AD) and possibly the medieval period (1066-1500 AD). Finds of Romano-British pottery were made during the construction of a school to the northeast of the site in 1964. Romano-British remains and pottery have been revealed to the northeast of St Nicholas Close.

A sequence of modern deposits associated with the former use of the site as a timber yard were observed above natural sediments. An undated layer of buried topsoil and a large feature, possibly a quarry pit were also uncovered. A number of finds were retrieved and include pottery and glass of 19th century date.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

Between the 4th July 1994 and the 17th July 1995, an archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the construction of 22 houses at St Nicholas Close, Boston, Lincolnshire (NGR TF 3352 4348). St Nicholas Close is located to the north of Fishtoft Road, in the civil parish of Boston (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Chestnut Homes, and was carried out by Archaeological Project Services.

2.2 Topography and Geology

St Nicholas Close is situated approximately 1km southeast 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 of the Tanvats association, stoneless, silty, silty over clayey and clayey soils or Wisbech association, silts over clayey soils (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 319). Local topography is relatively flat and lies about 3m above sea level.

2.3 Archaeological Setting

St Nicholas Close is located in an area of archaeological remains that date mainly from the Romano-British period. Located 500m to the northeast, in the area occupied by St Nicholas CE School, stray finds of Romano-British pottery were recovered during the construction of the school (B05/049 and B05/050). A watching brief carried out during extensions to St Nicholas school in 1992 (B05/051) revealed two infilled ditches containing pottery from the 2nd century AD (Heritage Lincolnshire 1992). Romano-British coins and pottery have also been unearthed (B05/046 and B05/047), 500m to the west in the area of Hussey Tower

Known evidence for medieval activity is restricted to the west of the site. Located 500m to the west is the presumed site of St John's Church and Hospital (B05/008), demolished in 1538, although the graveyard remained in use for some time after. Located to the north of St John's church are the remains of Hussey Hall (B05/007), built c. 1450, of which only the tower now survives. An archaeological investigation (B05/035) along Skirbeck Road uncovered possible remains of medieval field systems (T.L.A. 1990). Archaeological observations on the site of Boston college, c. 400m to the east found

further possible evidence of agricultural activity, though undated (A.P.S. 1994).

Post-medieval activity is represented by the Maud Foster Drain, built in 1568, that runs parallel to the site 100m to the west (Wright 1986). A plan of 1829 shows the site to be open ground, although a brickworks is situated in the vicinity of the present development area (Molyneux and Wright 1974).

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 by machine to various depths as required by the development. 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 or 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. Thereafter, to assist analysis, a context group matrix was created and phased. Three phases were identified:

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

Phase 1 Natural deposits

Deposits of mid brown clayey silt layered with blueish grey clayey silt was observed in trenches across the area of investigation (Group 1004). The thickness of these layers, which are interpreted as naturally formed alluvial deposits, was not ascertained.

Phase 2 Undated deposits

Overlying natural was a dark brownish grey clayey silt deposit (Group 1005). Identified as a former topsoil, this was between 0.16 and 0.24m thick.

Cut into the buried topsoil 1005 was a feature visible in plots B and C (Group 1006). This feature is also believed to exist in plot A. Its depth was estimated as 0.8m was ascertained but no function could be determined. The feature contained a fill of mid brown clayey silt (Group 1007) identified as redeposited natural.

Phase 3 Modern deposits

Overlying natural 1004 in plot J was a deposit of dark brown silty clay (Group 1032). This was identified as the modern topsoil.

Overlying group 1007 was a deposit of dark brown and grey clayey silt (Group 1008). This was identified as a miscellaneous dump deposit. A similar deposit of brown clayey silt (Group 1002) also above group 1007 was thought to be the fill of a pond.

Cut into 1007, was a feature seen in section only (Group 1030). This was 3m wide and contained a dark brown clay

containing pieces of plastic. Interpreted as a pit its function was probably for been refuse disposal.

A series of mixed deposits (Groups 1019, 1017, 1016, 1015 and 1012) were observed in section 7. One of the deposits (1019) contained brick and tile fragments and another (1012) had been burnt to a purplish red colour. Together, these are all considered to be dumped deposits or make up layers. Pottery of 19th century date was recovered from the sequence.

Cut into one of the make up layers (1015) was a possible circular feature (Group 1013). Exposed for a width of 1.4m and a length of 2.2m it was 0.6m deep. Identified as a pit, this contained a very dark brown soil with coal fragments and 19th century pottery.

Pit 1013 was cut by a north to south aligned linear feature (Group 1014). This was 0.4m wide and 0.35m deep and contained a ceramic pipe and fill of gravel.

Sealing pit cut 1030 was a dark grey silty clay layer (Group 1029). This was 0.3m thick and was identified as a make up layer.

Overlying groups 1015 and 1029 was a layer of tarmac and limestone rubble (Group 1018). This represents a modern road surface.

Cutting group 1002, in plot B, were two linear features (Group 1001 and 1009). One (1001) measured 0.6m wide and 0.4m deep and aligned northeast to southwest, no length was ascertained. The other (1009) was orientated north to south and was 0.3m wide and 0.45m deep. They both contained a ceramic pipe and gravel fill and were identified as cuts for drainage pipes.

Partly overlying group 1002 was a layer of

broken and crushed brick rubble (Group 1003). This was interpreted as debris derived from the demolition of recent buildings on the site.

Located over the base of plot C was a deposit of brownish grey clayey silt (Group 1010). Measuring approximately 0.55m thick this contained fragments of coal, brick, steel and wood. This group was interpreted as a general refuse layer.

Cut into group 1010 was a linear east west aligned feature (Group 1011). A length of 8m was exposed, this was 0.45m wide and 0.5m deep and was identified as a cut for a drainage pipe.

Overlying buried soil 1005 (Phase 2) in Plot L, was a brown silty clay layer (Group 1020). Identified as an imported topsoil, this was interpreted as a make up layer.

Cutting group 1020 was an east to west aligned linear feature (Group 1031). Exposed for 1.8m, this was 0.5m deep and was 0.7m wide and contained a plastic pipe and yellow sand fill. This was identified as a cut for a drainage pipe.

Cutting buried soil 1005 in plot E, was a large shallow feature (Group 1024). Exposed in section only, this was nearly 6m wide and 0.15m deep and contained a fill of crushed limestone. This was thought to be the remains of foundations.

Partly above group 1005 was a layer of red grey brick rubble (Group 1025) that was overlain by a deposit of mid brown sandy silt (Group 1022). In turn this was sealed by a dark brown sandy clay layer (Group 1021). Containing a large amount of brick and tile rubble. All these were identified as make up deposits.

Overlying buried soil 1005 in plot E, was

a dark blackish grey coarse stones (Group 1026). This was 0.6m thick and interpreted as a make up layer.

Above 1026 was a deposit of brown gravel (Group 1027) identified as a modern soakaway.

Located on the eastern side of plot E, above natural deposits was a layer of concrete on a limestone rubble base (Group 1028). This was a concrete surface associated with the former use of the site.

Sealing groups 1001, 1003, 1009, 1011, 1014, 1021 and 1031 and extensive across the site, was a layer of yellowish brown limestone rubble (Group 1000), identified as a yard surface.

Cutting limestone surface 1000 in plot E, was a rectangular cut containing a concrete block (Group 1023). This was a foundation associated with former buildings on the site.

6. DISCUSSION

Natural deposits (Phase 1) suggest a sequence of alluvial deposition with the variations in type representing different flow speeds of the water involved. In particular, the blue grey clayey silt is characteristic of deposition in still water.

Undated deposits (Phase 2) represent a former topsoil present before any development occurred at the site. Cutting this is a large feature present in plots B and C and thought to continue into plot A. No function could be ascertained, although it is thought likely that it is a quarry pit for the extraction of clay. The pit may relate to adjacent brickworks mapped in 1829.

Modern deposits (Phase 3) show sequences of make-up deposits of various materials

intermingled with dumped deposits, some of which are associated with rubbish dumping. Most finds including the bottle (Fig. 10) were retrieved from these layers. Above these are deposits associated with the use of the site as a timber storage warehouse. Services, in the form of drainage were readily apparent across the development area.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigations at St Nicholas Close, Boston reveal a sequence of natural to modern deposits. Undated deposits show evidence for former use of the site, most probably as an open area possibly with clay extraction. Modern deposits are associated with the construction and use of a timber warehouse that was previously located on the site.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wish to thank Chestnut Homes 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: Kate Hughes, Chris Moulis, Rene Mouraillè
Finds Processing: Denise Buckley
Illustration: Denise Buckley, Paul Cope-Faulkner
Post-excavation Analyst: Paul Cope-Faulkner

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11. ABBREVIATIONS

Numbers prefixed with B are the primary
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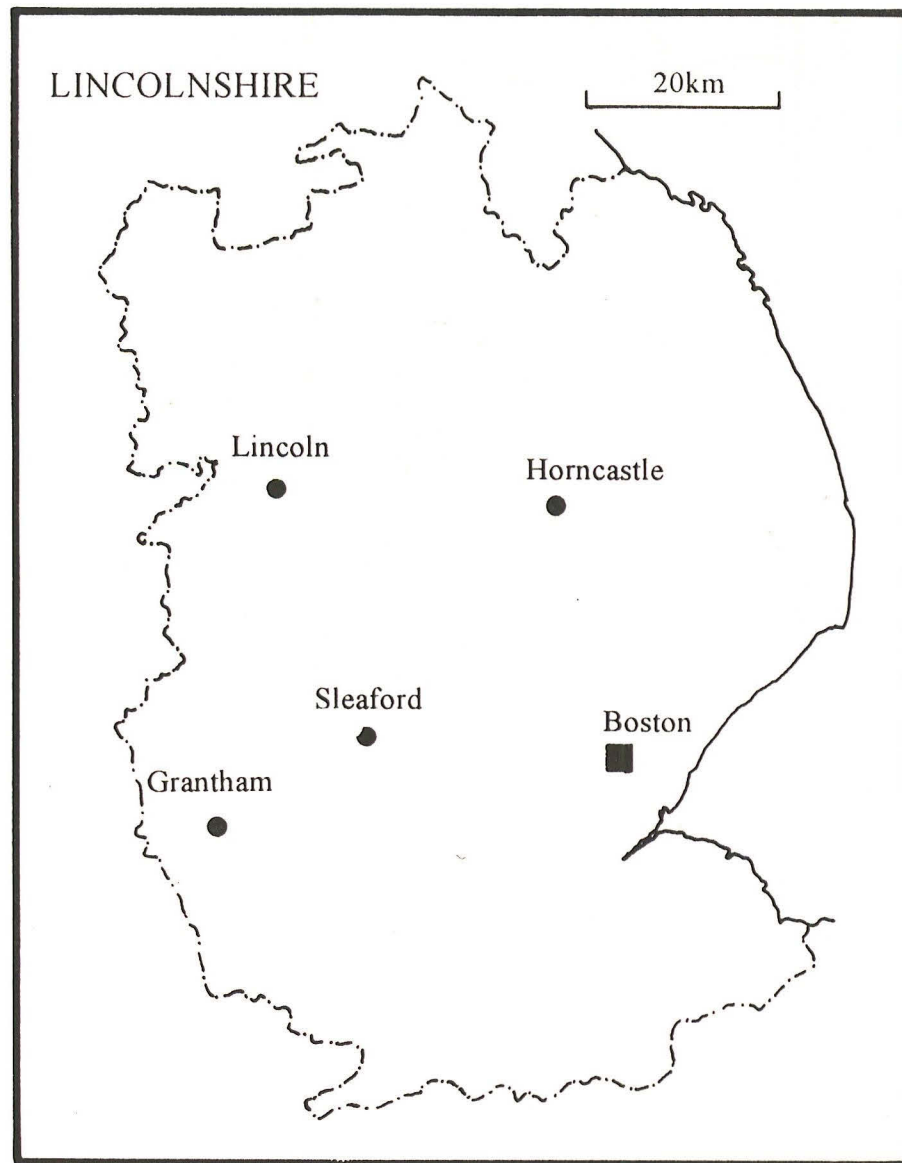
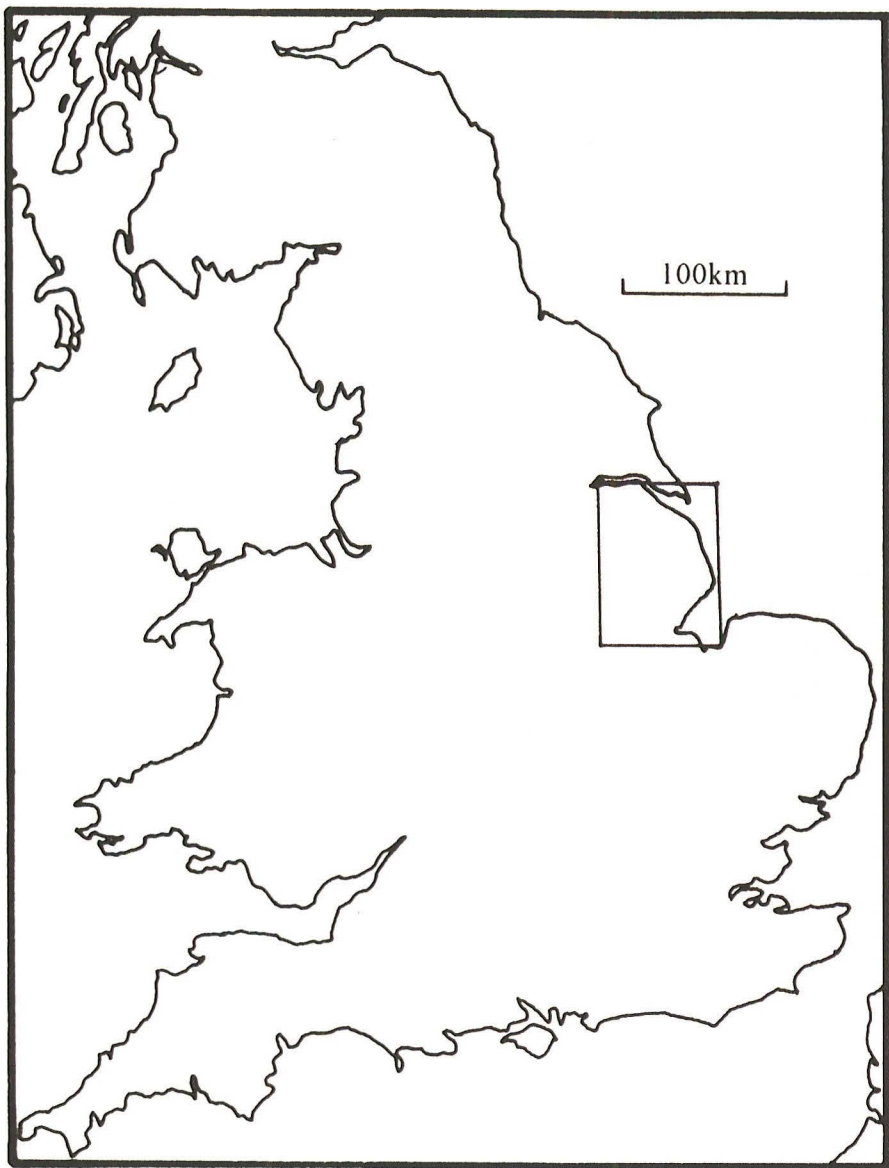


Fig. 1 General Location Plan

Fig. 2 Site Location Plan




 Area of Development

Fig. 3 Area of Development

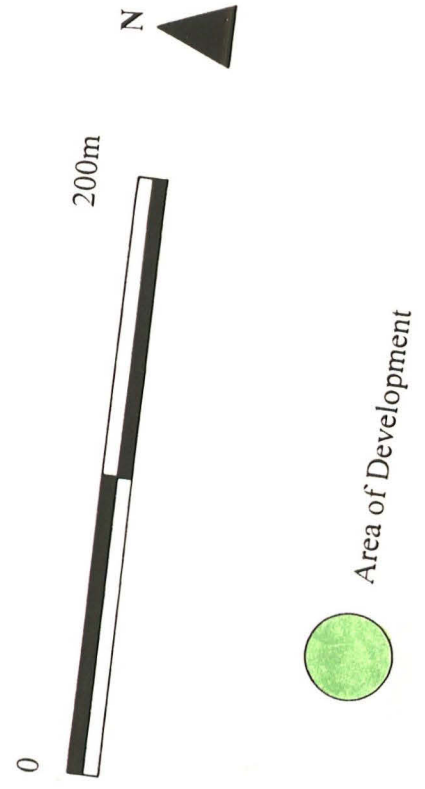
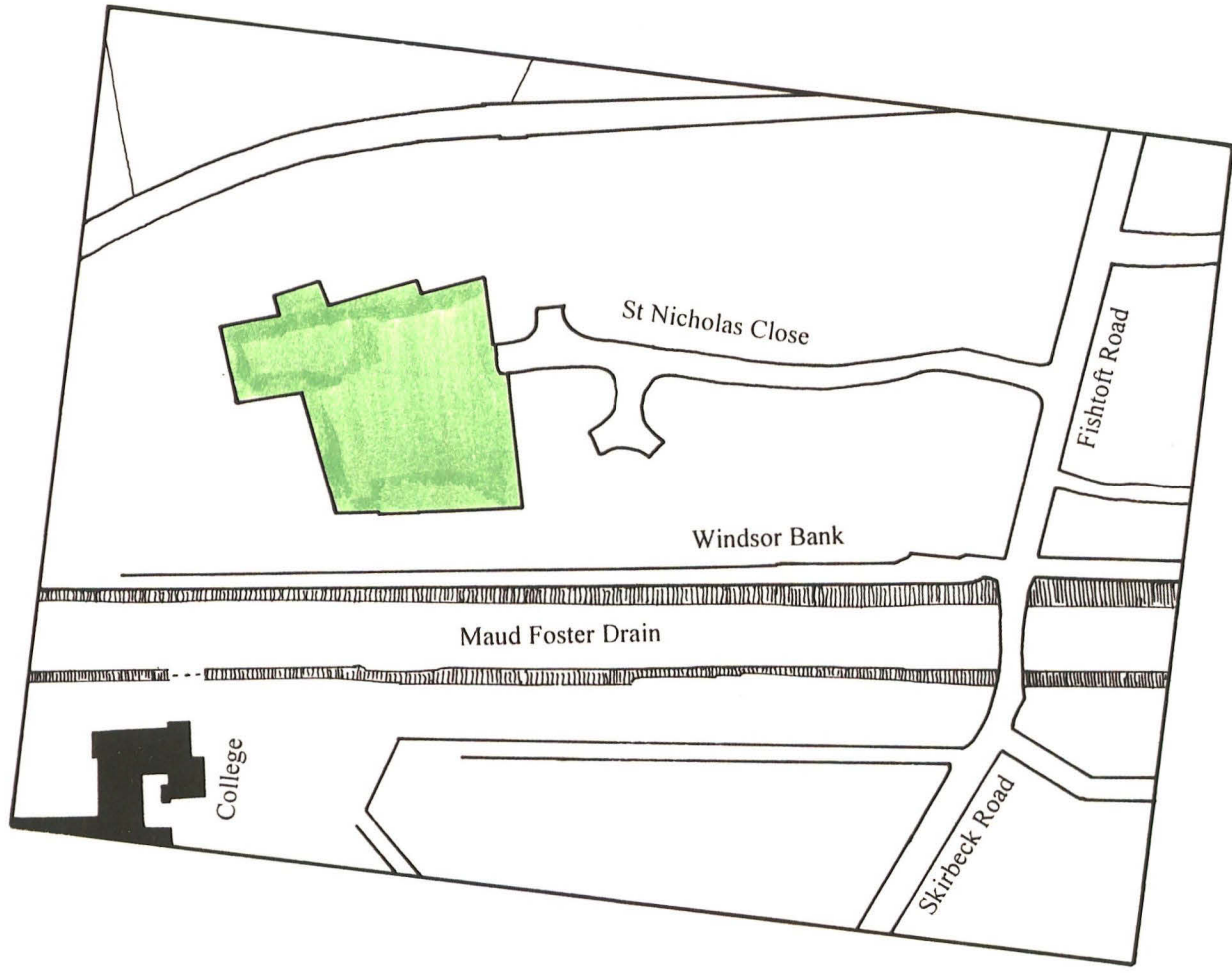
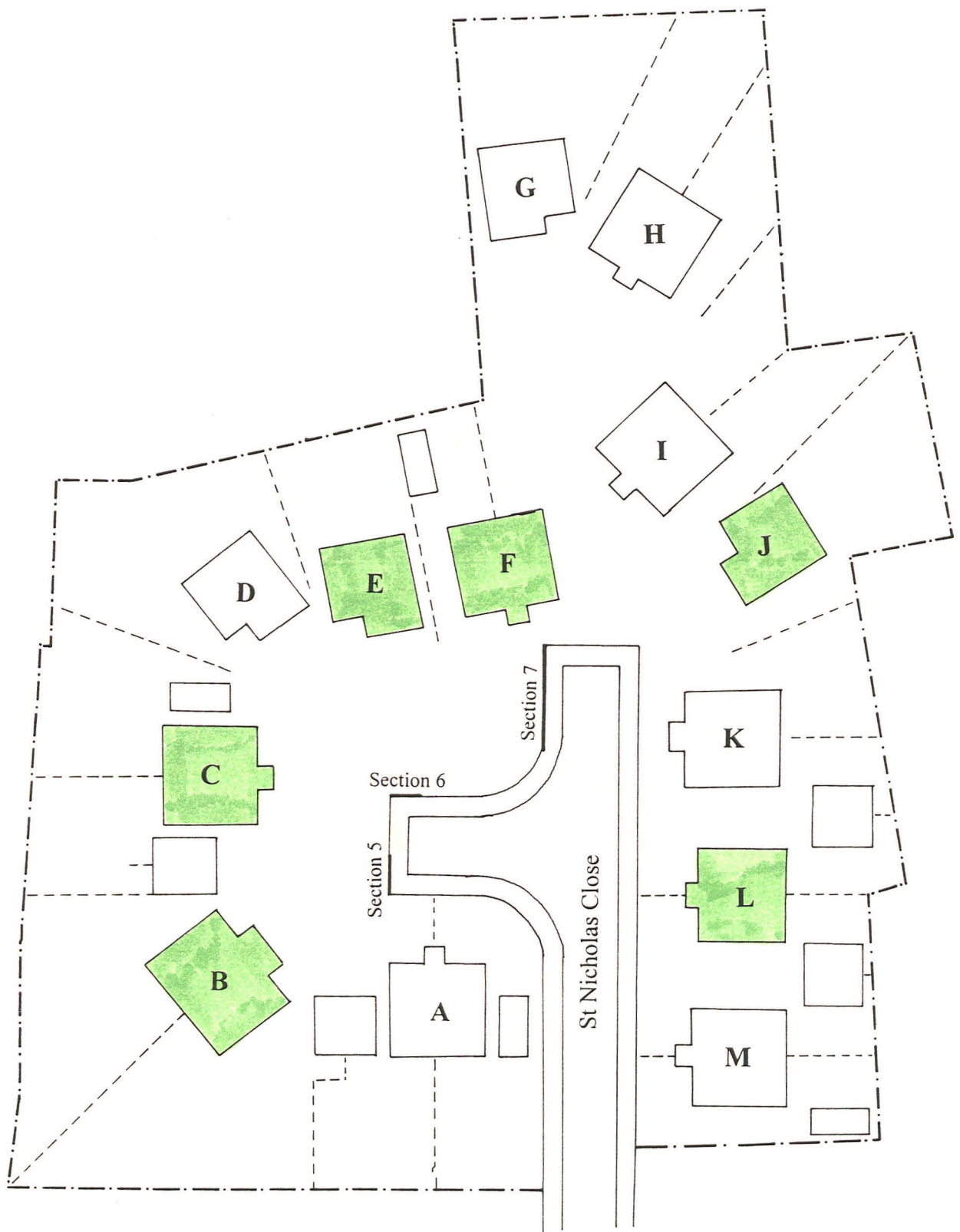
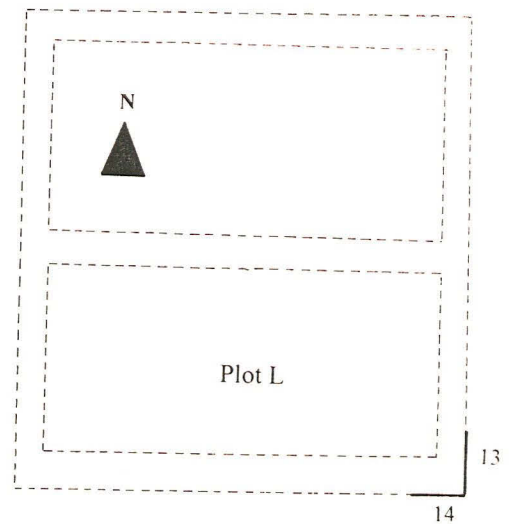
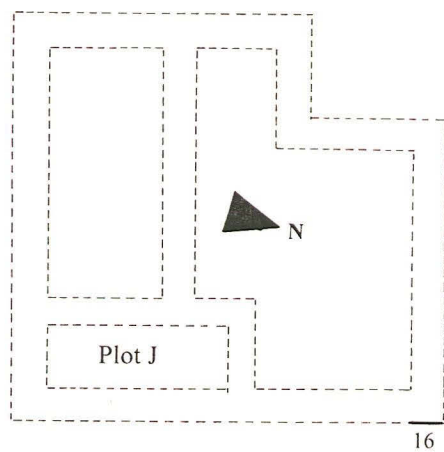
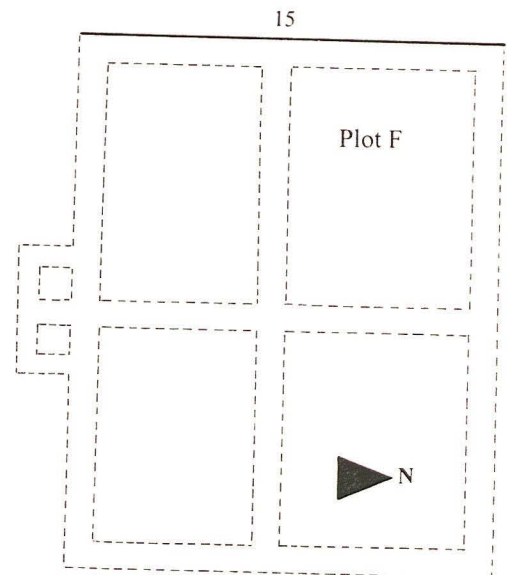
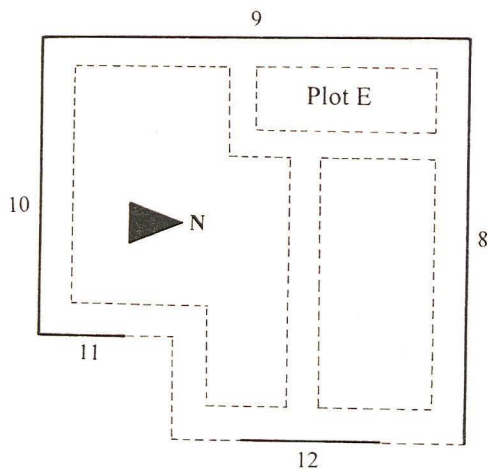
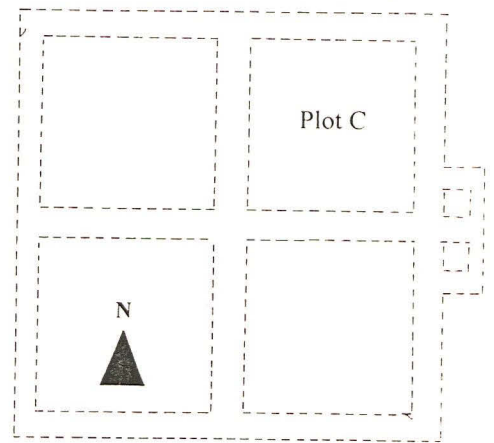
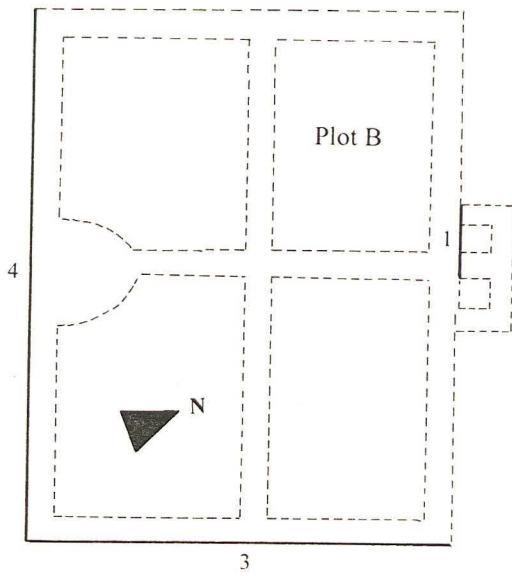


Fig. 4 Development Plan



Examined Plots

Fig. 5 Location of Sections



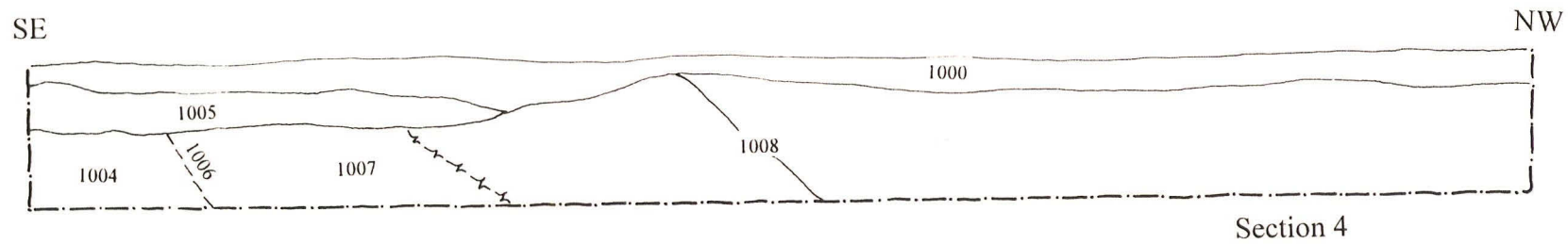
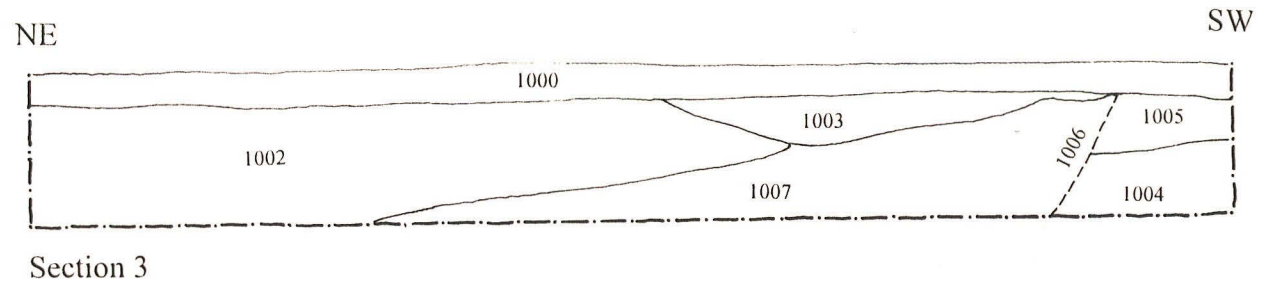
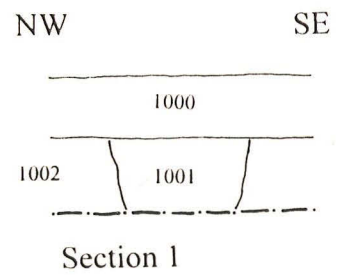
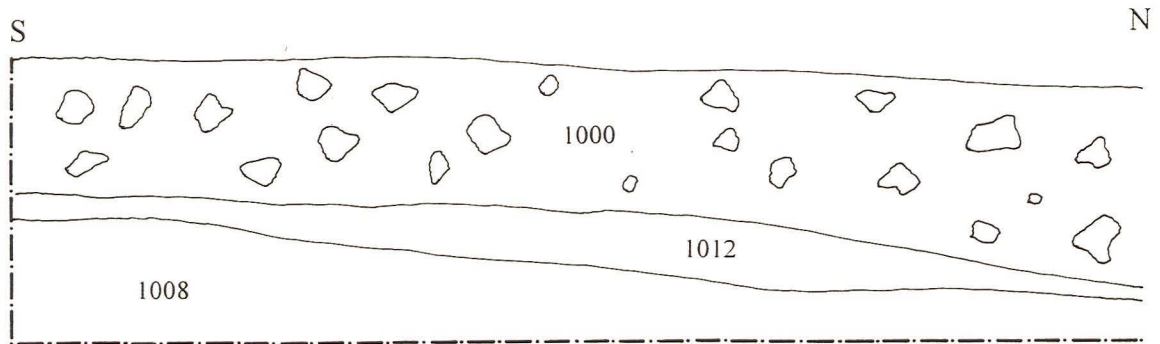
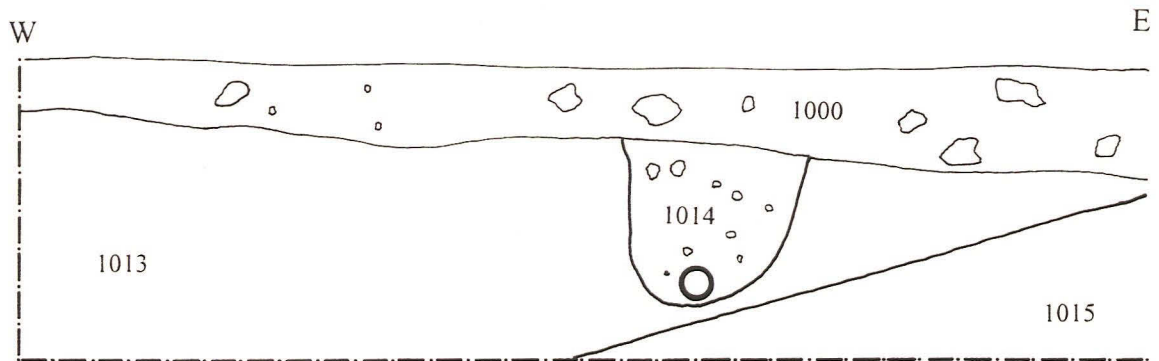


Fig. 6 Sections 1, 3 and 4

Fig. 7 Sections 5 and 6



Section 5



Section 6



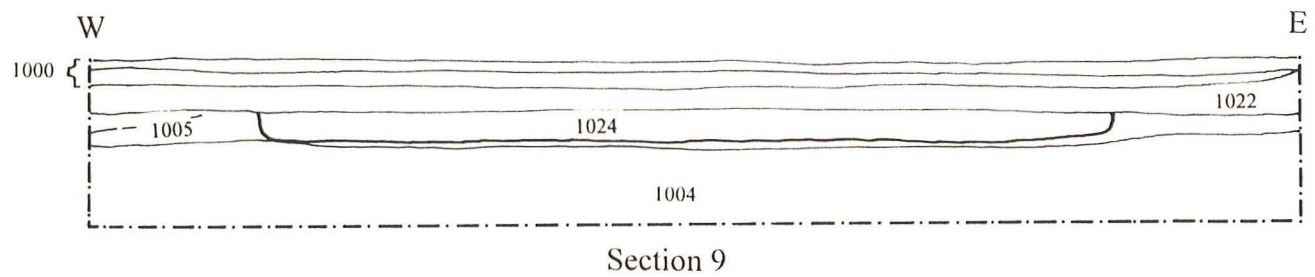
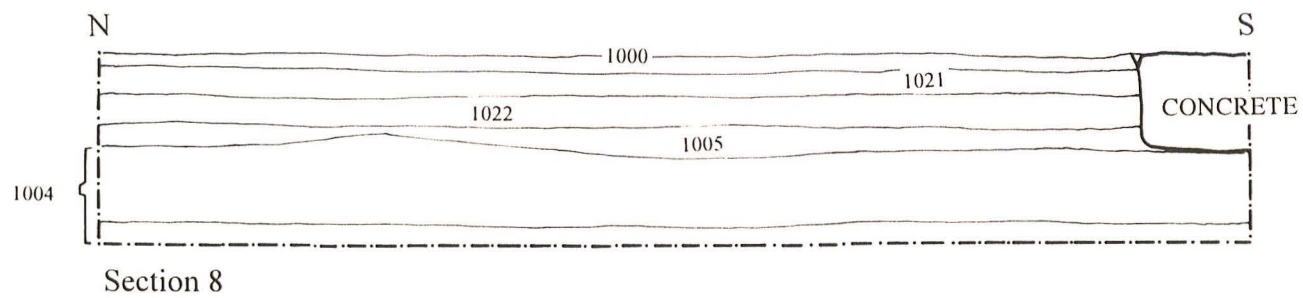
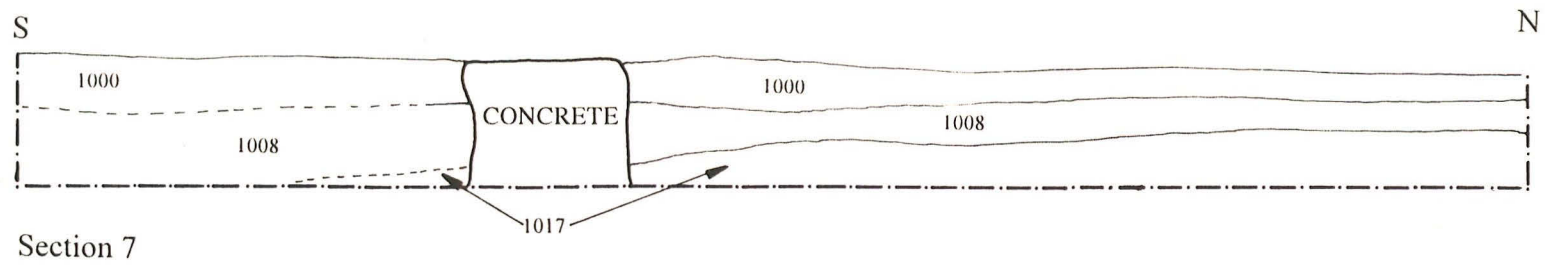
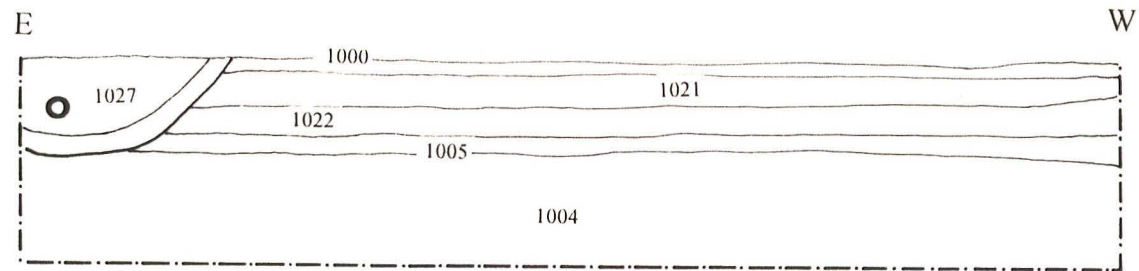
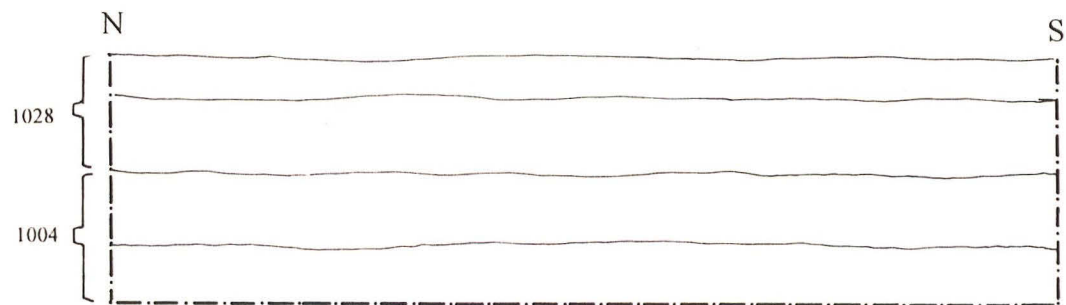


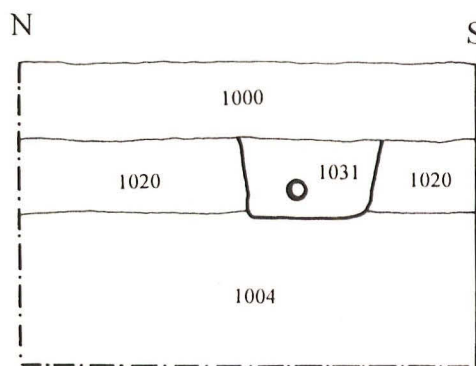
Fig. 8 Sections 7, 8 and 9



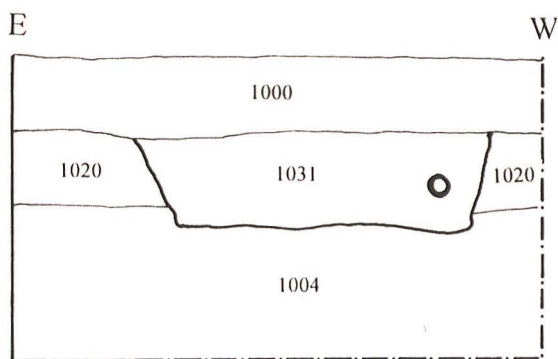
Section 10



Section 12



Section 13



Section 14



Fig. 9 Sections 10, 12, 13 and 14

Fig. 10 Glass Bottle



Soames and Co were a brewery operating from Spalding in the late 19th century and early 20th century.

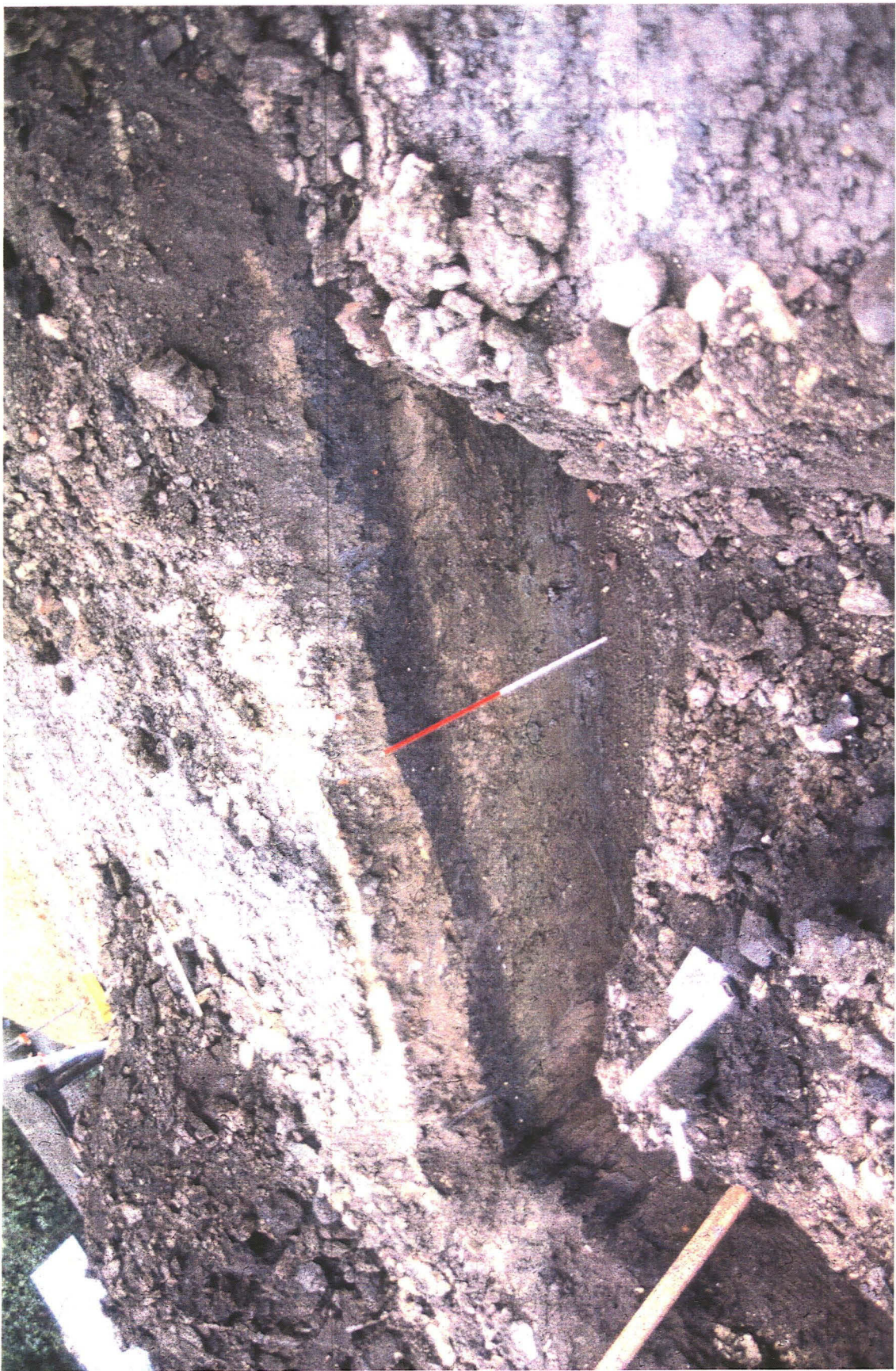
Plate 1. Aerial View of St Nicholas Close



Plate 2. View along Drainage trench, looking North



Plate 3. View showing sequence of Make-up deposits



APPENDIX 1

Context Group Summary

Context Group number	Description	Interpretation
1000	Limestone rubble	Yard surface
1001	Linear cut with ceramic pipe and gravel fill	Drainage pipe
1002	Dark brown clayey silt	Miscellaneous deposit
1003	Brick rubble	Demolition deposit
1004	Brown and blue grey clayey silt	Natural deposit
1005	Brownish grey clayey silt	Buried topsoil
1006	Indeterminate cut	Possible quarry
1007	Brown clayey silt	Fill of 1006
1008	Greyish brown clayey silt	Dump deposit
1009	Linear cut with ceramic pipe and gravel fill	Drainage pipe
1010	Brownish grey clayey silt	Refuse deposit
1011	Linear cut with ceramic pipe and gravel fill	Drainage pipe
1012	Purplish red grit and stone	Dump deposit
1013	Cut feature with dark brown soil and coal fragments	Pit cut
1014	Linear cut with ceramic pipe and gravel fill	Drainage pipe
1015	Brownish grey clayey silt	Make up deposit
1016	Mid brown clayey silt	Dump deposit
1017	Black sandy silt	Miscellaneous deposit
1018	Tarmac above limestone rubble	Recent road surface
1019	Dark grey clayey silt	Dump deposit
1020	Mid brown silty clay	Dump deposit
1021	Dark brown sandy clay with brick and tile	Demolition deposit

1022	Mid brown sandy silt	Make up deposit
1023	Concrete block set in cut	Foundation
1024	Shallow cut with limestone rubble fill	Foundation feature
1025	Red grey rubble	Make up deposit
1026	Dark blackish grey coarse stones	Make up deposit
1027	Brown gravel	Recent soak away
1028	Concrete layer above limestone rubble	Concrete surface
1029	Dark grey silty clay	Make up layer
1030	Cut feature with dark brown clay fill containing modern plastic	Pit cut
1031	Linear cut with plastic pipe and yellow sand fill	Drainage pipe
1032	Dark brown silty clay	Topsoil

APPENDIX 2

The Archive

The archive consists of:

- 89 . . Context records
- 33 . . Context group records
- 1 . . . Photographic records
- 21 . . Scale drawings
- 2 . . . Stratigraphic matrices
- 1 . . . Box 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, Lincoln Accession Number:
Archaeological Project Services project code

71:95
BNC94