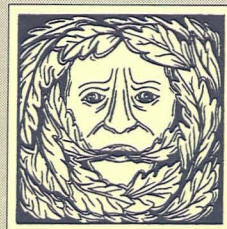


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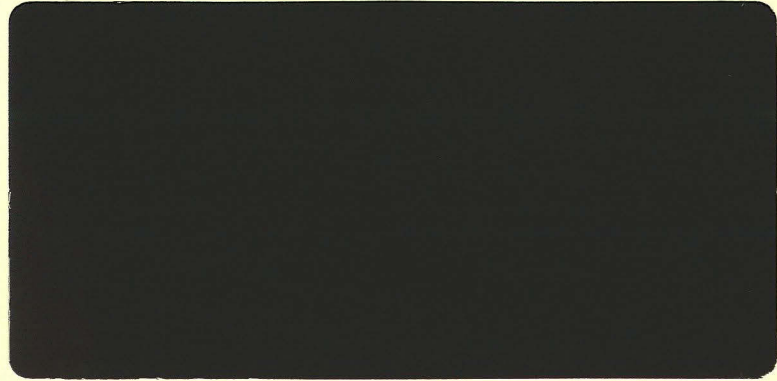
95/13

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
AT PLOT 4,
CHURCH LANE, SWINESHEAD,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(SCL4 95)**



A P S
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
AT PLOT 4,
CHURCH LANE, SWINESHEAD,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(SCL4 95)**

Work Undertaken For
Mr G.H. Allenby

December 1995

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1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the construction of a single dwelling and garage adjacent to Church Lane, Swineshead. The watching brief monitored the excavation of the foundations for this structure.

There have been no finds of prehistoric or Roman material in the immediate vicinity, but remains of these periods are common in the surrounding landscape. In the fields around the village there is evidence for a series of enclosures (possibly farms or small settlements) tentatively dated to the Romano-British period (c. A.D. 50-400).

Artefacts from the medieval period (c. A.D. 1066-1500) are frequently recovered in the village and surrounding parish. Medieval pottery has been found on land adjacent to the investigation site and the countryside around the village incorporates a series of archaeological monuments from this period. The site is within 150m of the 14th century church of St. Mary, close to the heart of the medieval settlement. Additionally, a ditch containing pottery dating to the 18th century has been revealed immediately alongside the site.

Excavation of the foundation trenches revealed that the area had probably been a field during the medieval and later periods and had not been occupied prior to the present housing construction.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

On the 5th December 1995, an archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the construction of a single dwelling and garage at Plot 4, Church Lane, Swineshead. Approval for the

development was sought through the submission of planning application B19/0449/95. Permission was granted subject to a standard negative condition for archaeological recording. The archaeological work was commissioned by Mr G. H. Allenby, and was carried out by Archaeological Project Services in accordance with a brief set by the Boston Borough Community Archaeologist.

2.2 Topography and Geology

Swineshead is situated 7km from the northwest coast of The Wash, amongst the fens of south Lincolnshire (Fig. 1). Approximately 40km southeast of Lincoln and 10km southwest of Boston, the town lies in the civil parish of Swineshead, Boston District. The investigation site is c. 150m west of the village centre, as defined by the parish church of St. Mary (Fig. 2). Located at grid reference TF23584017, the development area is approximately 180 square metres in extent (Fig. 3).

The site and immediate surroundings form an area of relatively flat ground at c. 5m O.D. Local soils are the Agney Association calcareous alluvial gley soils, developed on marine alluvium on flat reclaimed land (Hodge *et al.*, 1984, 87).

2.3 Archaeological Setting

Although no prehistoric or Romano-British finds have been recovered in the immediate vicinity of the development, fieldwalking has produced a significant quantity of material from this period within a 5km radius of the site. Aerial reconnaissance has located a series of enclosures, probably farms or settlements, that are typical of the late prehistoric - Romano-British period (B19/001; 002; 004; 012).

Archaeological evidence for occupation during the periods of Anglo-Scandinavian

migration and conquest (c. A.D. 400-1066) is restricted to a single late Saxon strap-end (B19/018), found within 400m of the development site (Fig. 2). The earliest historical reference to Swineshead, indicating the presence of a monastery, occurs shortly after A.D. 650. A passage from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle mentions *Swineshaefed* in 675 A.D. (Ekwall 1974, 457), suggesting that occupation during the 7th century is to be expected.

Medieval finds are common in the vicinity of the development, and the surrounding landscape contains several standing monuments from this period. Pottery of medieval date has been recovered from land adjacent to the investigation site on Plot 2, Church Lane (A.P.S. 1995a, 1), and also just to the east and southwest (B19/026 and B19/039; Fig. 3). Stenning or Estovening (B19/014), a village mentioned in the Domesday survey of A.D. 1086 but deserted in the 14th century, was located about 0.5km west of the development area. A church of the 14th century, St. Mary the Virgin (B19/006), lies to the immediate east of the site. Estevening Hall (B19/015) and Manwar Ings Castle (B19/025), relics of the feudal economy, are situated respectively 1km to the southwest and northeast of the development (Fig. 2). A Cistercian abbey of the 12th century lies c. 1.6 km to the east of Church Lane.

Swineshead was a market town during the medieval period and had charters for two annual fairs (Platts 1985, appendix 1). Within c. 200m of the site is the Butter Cross (B19/005). Located at the centre of the village, this stone market cross provided a focus for trading activities during the medieval period and later.

A north-south ditch, possibly an agricultural boundary and dated to the 18th century, has been recorded immediately alongside the present development area on

Plot 3, Church Lane (A.P.S. 1995b, 1; Fig. 3).

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 opened to a depth of c. 0.7m using a mechanical excavator (Fig. 5). 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 where exposed. A photographic record was compiled and sections were drawn at scale 1:10.

5. RESULTS

Records of the deposits and features identified during the watching brief were examined. A stratigraphic matrix of all recorded contexts was created and phased. 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 Possible Medieval - Early Post-medieval deposits
- Phase 3 Modern deposits

Phase 1 Natural deposits

A layer of light brown sandy silt (3, 6, 10, 13, 16) was seen in the bases of the foundation trenches across the entire

development area (Fig. 6). Interpreted as a natural deposit, it was not excavated to its lowest extent but was at least 0.3m thick.

The surface of this layer undulated, with respect to the modern ground surface. In the middle of the investigation site the natural surface was lower than elsewhere. Above the deposit where this depression occurred was a light brown silt sand (9; Fig. 6, Section 3). Although not recorded in any other part of the site, this material is also considered to be natural.

Phase 2 Possible Medieval - Early Post-medieval deposits

Overlying the natural deposits was a brown sandy silt (2, 5, 8, 12, 15; Fig. 6). Containing charcoal fragments, roots and wormholes, this is interpreted as a transformed natural layer. A single piece of Toynton All Saints pottery of the late 13th-17th century (Hilary Healey, pers comm) was recovered from the deposit, indicating a possible date for this period of transformation.

Phase 3 Modern deposits

Sealing the phase 2 subsoil was a *c.* 0.25m thick layer of dark reddish brown humic silt (1, 4, 7, 11, 14). Extending across the whole of the site, this deposit contained roots and occasional limestone fragments and formed a layer of topsoil (Fig. 6).

6. DISCUSSION

Light brown sand silts exposed across the entire development site are interpreted as natural alluvial deposits laid down in a marine environment (phase 1).

The surface of these undulated gently, such that the deposits were encountered at variable depths between 0.45m - 0.6m below the present ground surface. Above this horizon was a transformed sandy silt

(phase 2). Agriculture is considered to be responsible for the transformation of this deposit and also the creation of the undulating surface of the underlying natural layers. Pottery of late 13th - 17th century date recovered from the deposit suggests that this agricultural activity occurred during the medieval or early post-medieval period. These findings largely correspond with the results of previous investigations in the vicinity (A.P.S. 1995a; A.P.S. 1995b) to indicate that this area of land south of Church Lane was an agricultural field during the medieval and post-medieval periods.

The modern ground surface was provided by a topsoil (phase 3) that indicated that the area had remained a field prior to the present development of the site for housing.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigations at Church Lane, Swineshead revealed a sequence of natural to modern deposits. Natural silts of marine origin were encountered within 0.5m of the present ground surface. Above the natural deposits was an agricultural soil of possible medieval - early post-medieval date. Topsoil provided the present ground surface across the area.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wish to thank Mr G. H. Allenby for funding the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. Steve Haynes coordinated the work and David Start edited this report. Hilary Healey identified the pottery. Background information was provided by Jim Bonner the Boston District Community Archaeologist and parish files maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Manager: Steve Haynes
Site Supervisor: Rene Mouraille
Illustration: Denise Buckley
Post-excavation Analyst: Gary Taylor

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11. ABBREVIATIONS

Reports by Archaeological Project Services
are referred to in the text by the initials
'A.P.S.'.

Numbers prefixed 'B' are the reference
codes used by the Boston Borough
Community Archaeologist.

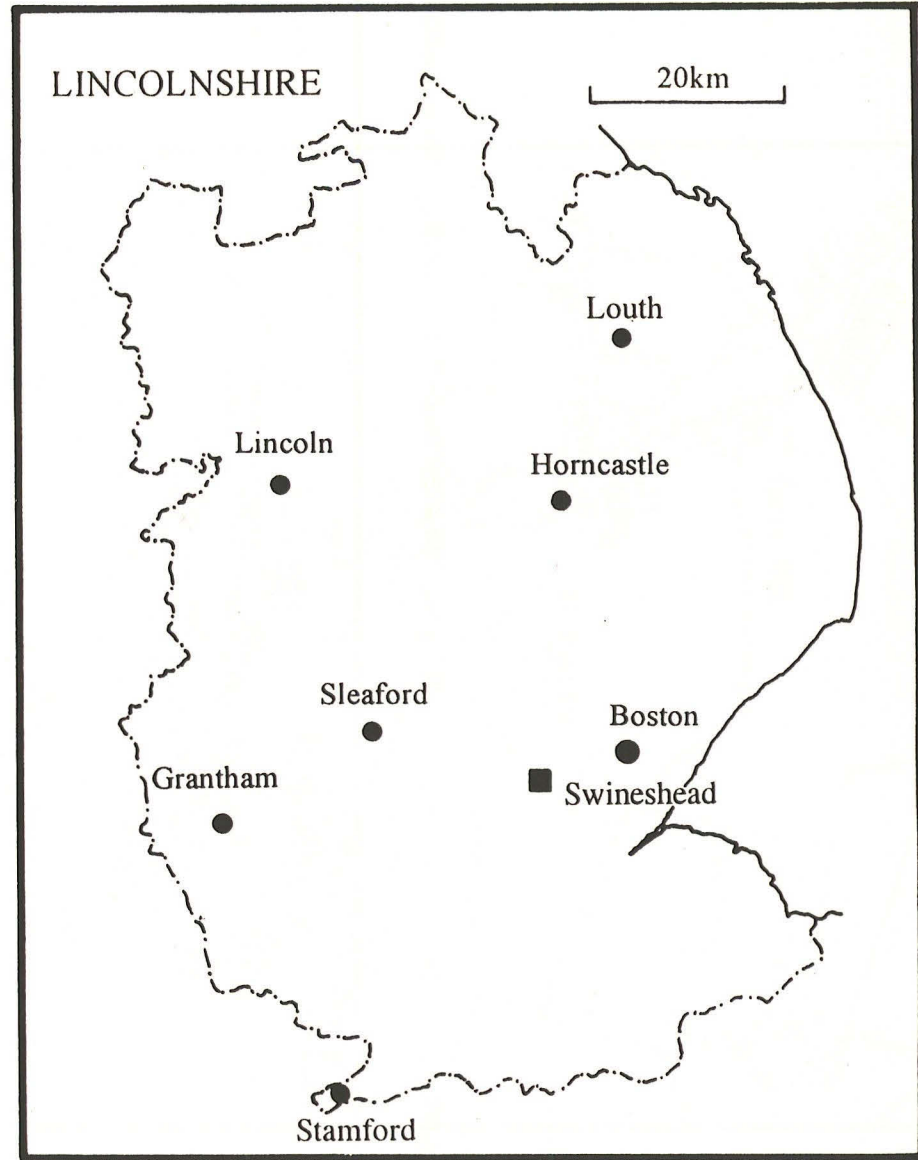
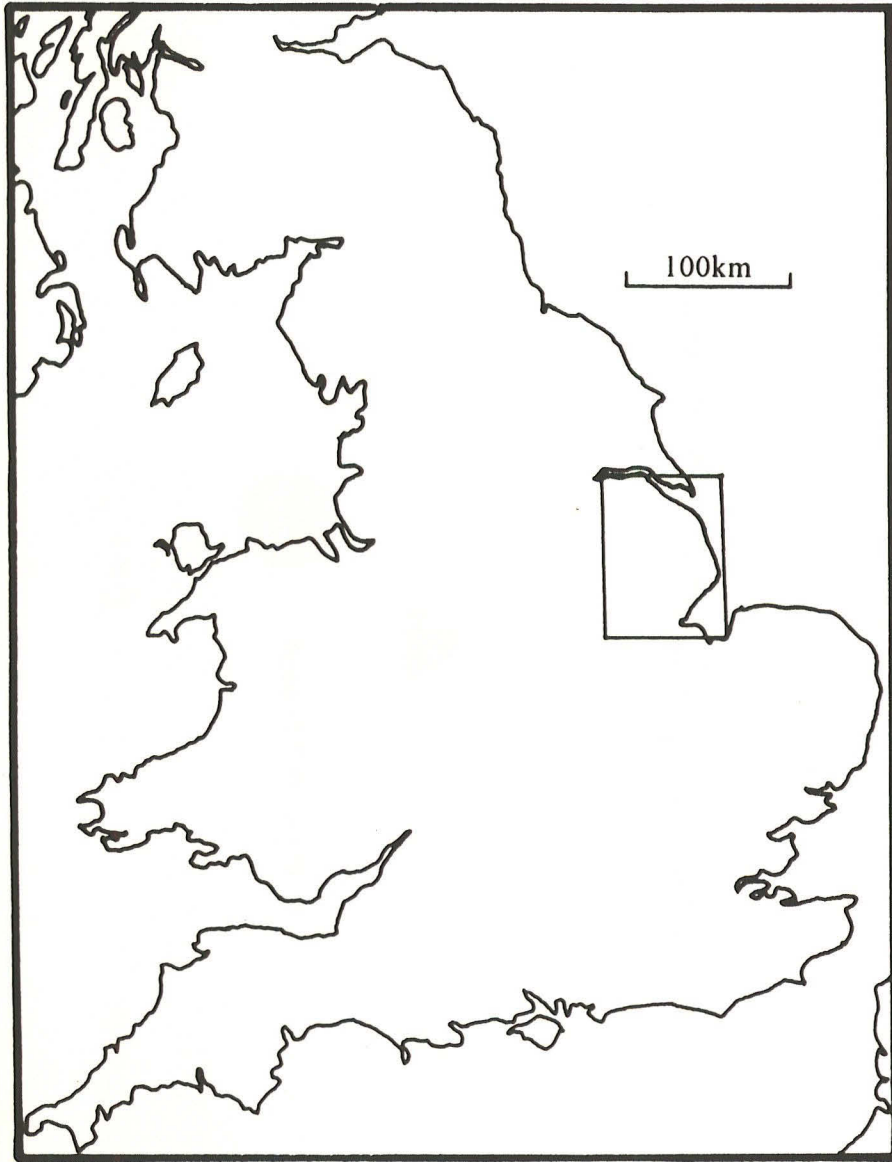


Fig. 1 General Location Plan

Figure. 2 Site Location Plan

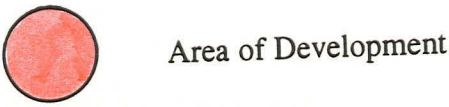
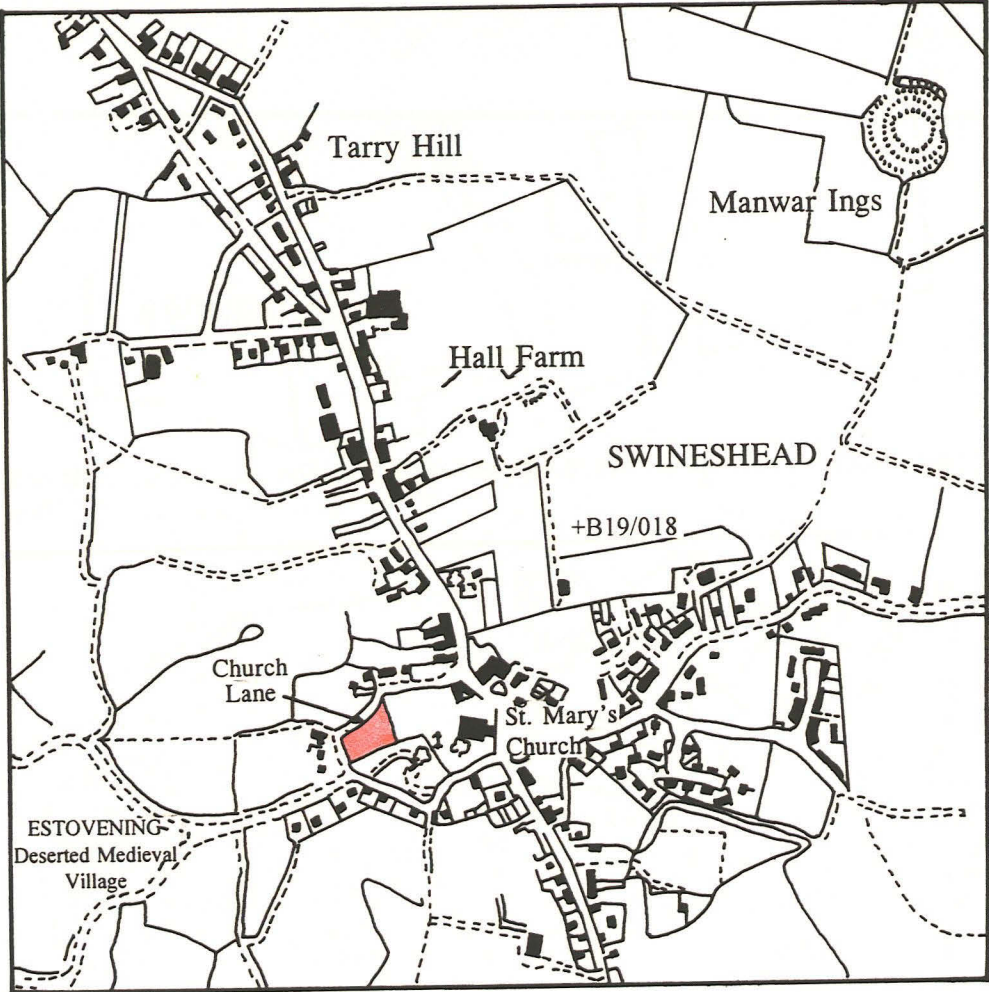
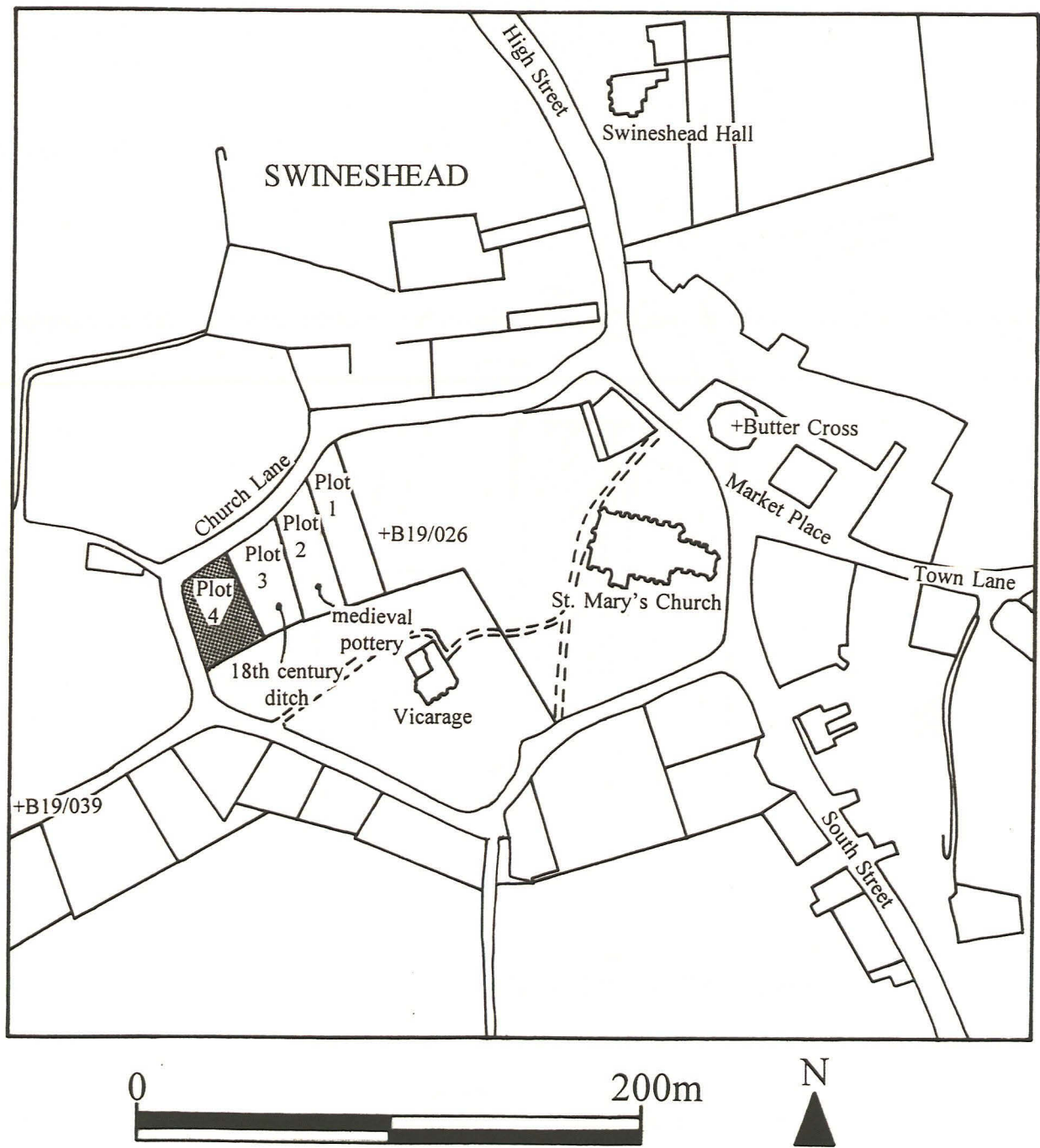
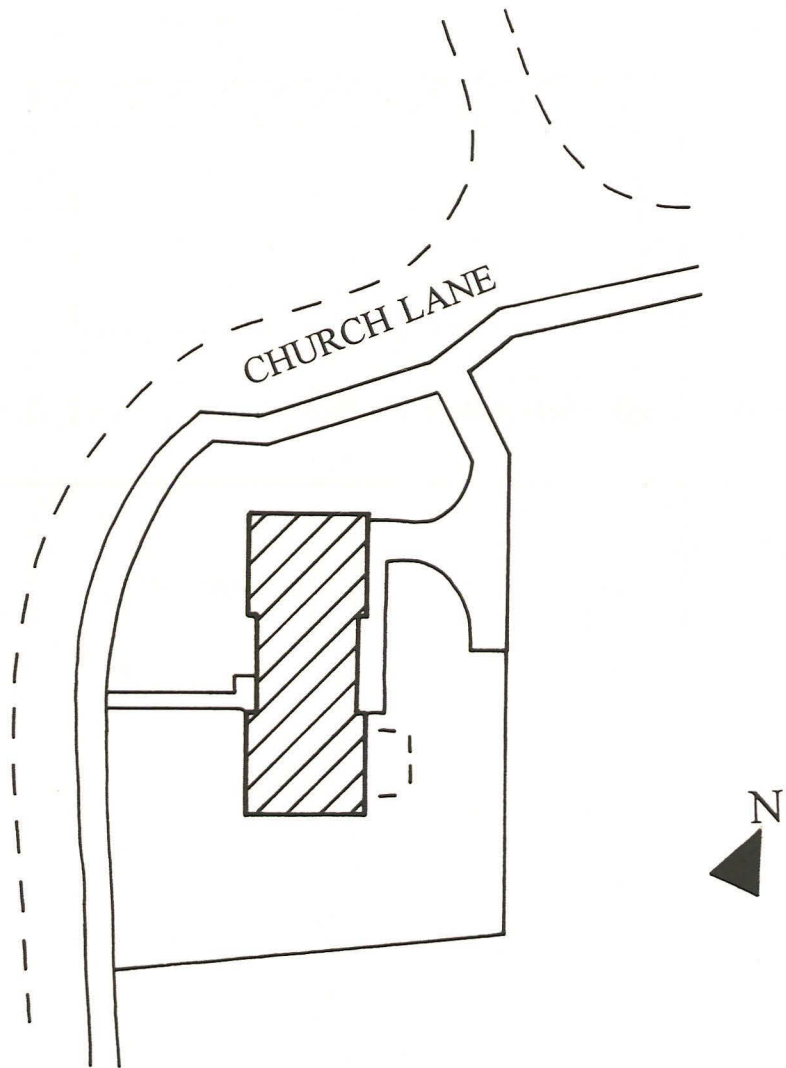


Fig. 3 Detailed Plan of Development Area and Surrounds



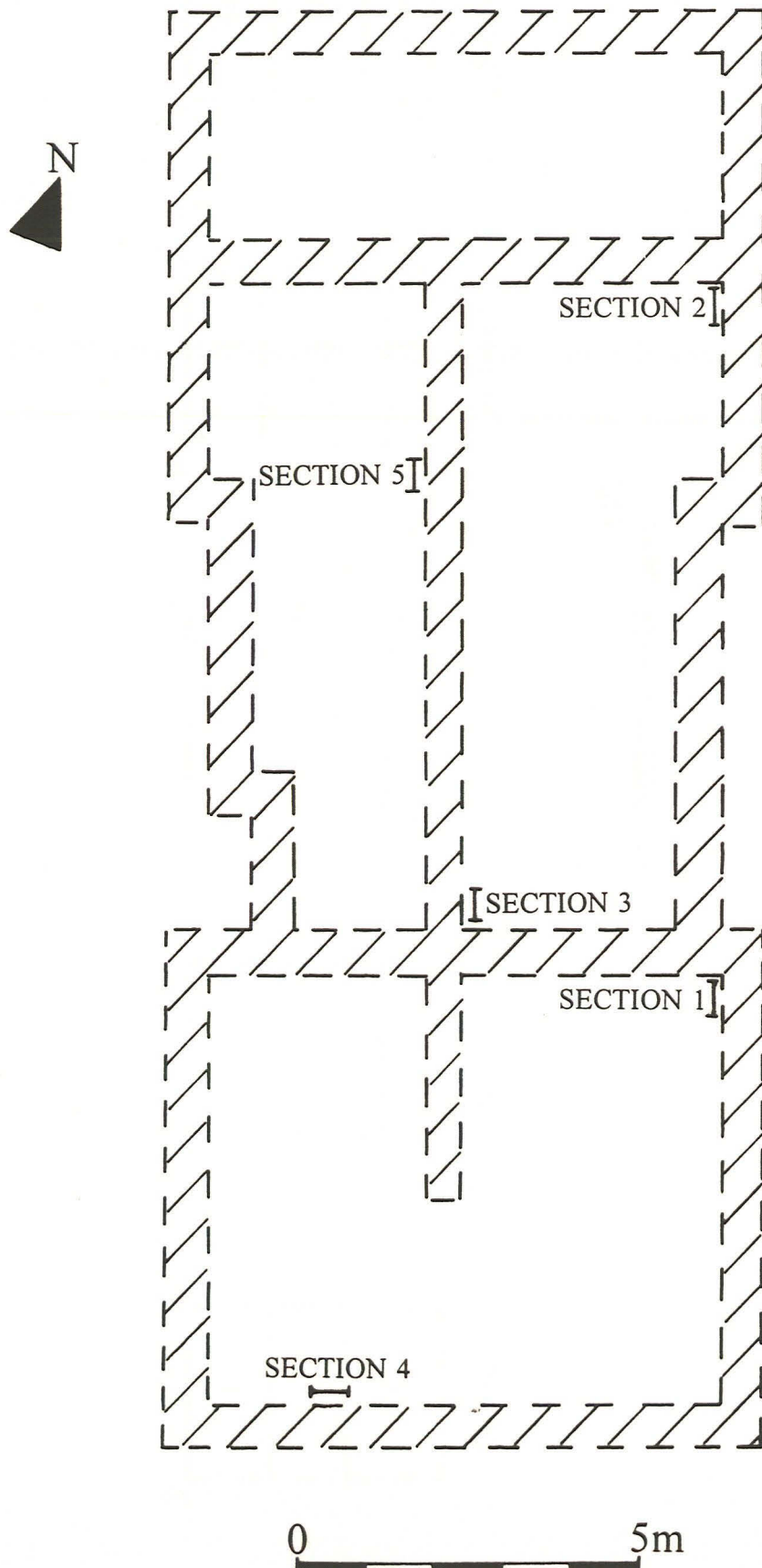
AREA OF DEVELOPMENT

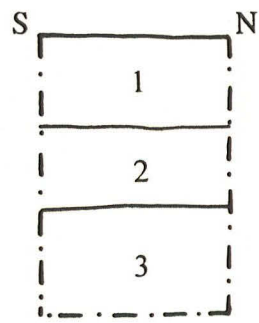
Fig. 4 Development Area Plan



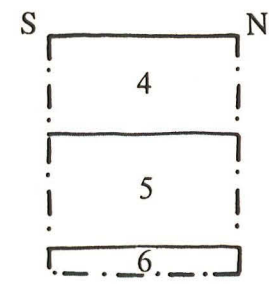
INVESTIGATION AREA

Fig. 5 Foundation Trench Plan, showing locations of sections

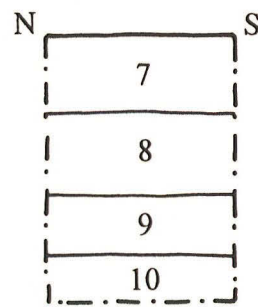




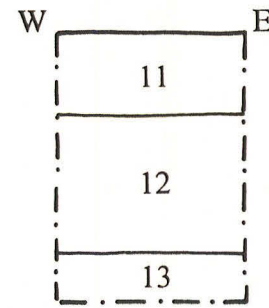
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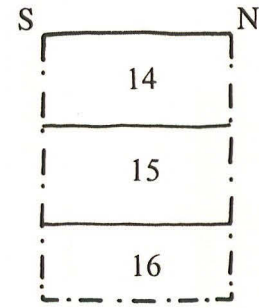
Section 2



Section 3



Section 4



Section 5



Fig. 6 Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

APPENDIX 1

Context Summary

Context	Description	Interpretation
001	Dark brown sandy silt with frequent roots and occasional limestone fragments	Topsoil
002	Medium brown sandy silt	Subsoil
003	Light brown sandy silt	Natural
004	Dark brown silt with frequent roots	Topsoil
005	Light brown sandy silt	Subsoil
006	Light brown sandy silt	Natural
007	Dark brown silt with frequent roots and occasional dark coloured stones	Topsoil
008	Mid brown sandy silt with charcoal fragments	Subsoil
009	Light brown silty sand with worm holes	Natural
010	Light brown sandy silt	Natural
011	Dark brown silt with frequent roots	Topsoil
012	Mid brown sandy silt	Subsoil
013	Light brown sandy silt	Natural
014	Dark brown silt with frequent roots	Topsoil
015	Mid brown sandy silt	Subsoil
016	Light brown sandy silt	Natural

APPENDIX 2

The Archive

The archive consists of:

- 16 . . Context Records
- 9 . . . Photographs
- 5 . . . Scale Drawings
- 1 . . . Stratigraphic Matrix
- 1 . . . Bag 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	191.95
Archaeological Project Services project code	SCL4 95