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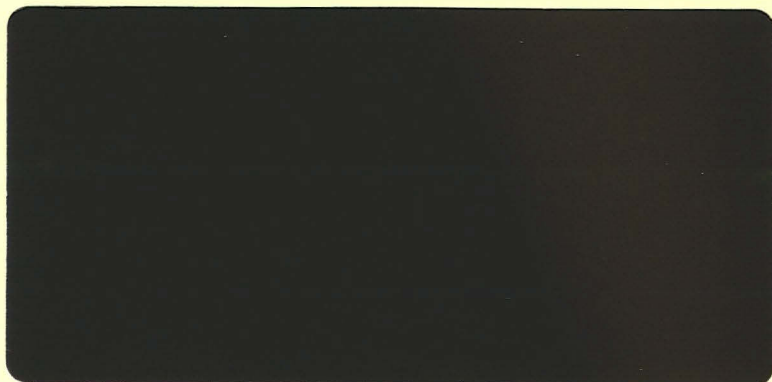
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF
TEST PITS AT
17/19 HIGH STREET,
BOSTON,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(BHS96)**



A P S
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES

Lincolnshire County Council
Archaeology Section
12 Higham Lane
LINCOLN LN2 5AL
TEL: 0522 515212 FAX: 0522 530724

13/2/96



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF
TEST PITS AT
17/19 HIGH STREET,
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(BHS96)**

Work Undertaken For
Meldrum Lee and Gillatt.

February 1996

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1. SUMMARY

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken during the clearance of demolition rubble on an area of planned redevelopment at 17/19 High Street, Boston, Lincolnshire. The site investigation was designed to assess the potential effect of piling, the depth to potential archaeology and the possible presence of cellars.

Development at 17/19 High Street affects an area containing archaeological remains dating from the medieval period (AD 1066 - 1500) and later. Close by, though not accurately located, is the site of a Carmelite Friary, built in 1307. Two medieval half-timbered buildings survive within 30m to the south. Medieval pottery has been recovered from an old well 60m to the southwest and from building sites 110m to the northwest.

The site was covered in demolition rubble to a minimum depth of c. 0.5m and was further interrupted by rubble filled cellars to a total depth of 1.8m, below pavement level. Below the cellar floors were deposits of alluvial soil.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

On the 30th January 1996, archaeological recording was undertaken during the clearance of demolition rubble in advance of redevelopment at 17/19 High Street, Boston, Lincolnshire. Approval for the proposed development was sought through the submission of planning application number B06/0185/95. Permission was granted subject to a standard negative condition for archaeological works. The archaeological work was commissioned by Meldrum Lee and Gillatt, and was carried out by Archaeological Project Services.

2.2 Topography and Geology

Boston is situated 45km southeast of Lincoln and approximately 7km from the northwest coast of The Wash, among the fens of south Lincolnshire. Bisected by the River Witham, the town is located in Boston District, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1). Situated on the west bank of the Witham, High Street is aligned north to south and the site lies about 210m north of Haven Bridge (Fig. 2).

Lying at a height of c. 6m OD, the development site is located c. 230m south of the town centre defined by St. Botolph's parish church. Centred on National Grid Reference TF32734394, the development site covered an area of c. 170 square metres (Fig. 3).

Local soils are the Tanvats Association typical alluvial gley soils (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 319) and Wisbech Association calcareous alluvial gley soils developed in marine alluvium (*ibid.*, 361). Beneath this marine alluvium is glacial drift that was deposited in a geological basin between the Lincolnshire Wolds and the East Anglian Heights (Harden 1978, 5). These glacial deposits in turn overlie a solid geology of Jurassic clays.

2.3 Archaeological Setting

High Street is located in an area of archaeological activity dating from the medieval and post-medieval periods. In the immediately vicinity of the development area, though of uncertain location and extent, is the site of a Carmelite Friary (B05/013). Although the Carmelites had an oratory in Boston by 1293, they acquired, and transferred to, a new site on this side of the river in 1307. At the same time the friars received permission to erect a church and other buildings. Later, in 1350, the friars were given land to extend

their house and graveyard. The house was dissolved in about 1538 (Page 1988, 216-7). A recent archaeological investigation at Paddock Grove, 170m to the southwest, revealed reused worked masonry derived from the friary (Archaeological Project Services 1994, 1).

At the Axe and Cleaver on West Street, a well or cistern was discovered during alterations to the public house cellar. Pottery of 12th to 16th century date was recovered from this well (B05/067). Nearby are two half-timbered buildings. Both of these, at 25 and 35 High Street, are 15th century 'hall houses' (B05/074, B05/075 respectively).

Approximately 260m to the southwest of the development site, human burials (B05/039) were discovered during roadworks on Liquorpond Street. Although undated, these bodies lie close to the site of a church or chapel.

Pottery has been recovered from development sites in the Lincoln Lane area, about 110m to the northwest of the present investigation area. Although mostly of post-medieval date, these finds have included a complete medieval baluster jug (B05/064).

3. AIMS

The aims of the appraisal were to locate the presence of any cellars and record possible depths at which archaeological deposits, if present, occurred and to determine their date, function and origin.

4. METHODS

Following removal of demolition rubble over the site, two trial holes were machine excavated to a depth of about 1.8m, below modern street level. Deposits within these

pits were recorded by allocating each a unique context number with descriptions. The location of the two trial holes are given in Fig. 3. A photographic record was compiled. The cellar in the standing building, 19 High Street, was also examined.

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. Two phases were identified:

- Phase 1 Flood Alluvial deposits
- Phase 2 Modern deposits

5.1 Phase 1 Flood Alluvial deposit

Two deposits (06, 010) of greenish grey silty clay were observed at a depth of *c.* 1.8m. Containing some shell and organic material, these were considered to have been flood deposits.

5.2 Phase 2 Modern deposits

Above the alluvium, two deposits (09, 05) of bricks laid horizontally on a mortar bed were recorded at a depth of 1.8m below street level. It was considered that these two were the same structure and were interpreted as a cellar floor. Above this, and probably abutting 05, was a vertical linear brick structure (02) aligning roughly north-south. This was *c.* 0.5m long, by 0.3m thick and was seen to a depth of *c.* 1m, but appeared to have continued deeper. It was interpreted as a wall. Abutting 02 at a depth of *c.* 0.75m, from pavement level, was an horizontal structure (03) of alternate black and red square tiles bound in mortar. This was interpreted as a floor. To the west of, and apparently

abutting, 02 was a grey sandy/gritty silty clay (07). This was seen at a depth of c. 0.5m and was considered to have been a fill of the foundation trench for wall 02, or was land build up.

Overlying the cellar floor (05, 09) and providing the present ground surface across the extent of the development area was a group of deposits (01, 04, 08, 011) consisting of a red brown brick with wood, mortar, concrete, tile, *etc.* with brown sandy silt. This was recorded as demolition rubble.

6. DISCUSSION

Silty clays, observed c. 1.8m below the present ground surface, were the earliest deposits encountered (phase 1). These, considered to have been natural alluvium, were comparable to other flood deposits seen on the opposite side of the river, at the site of Boston General Hospital. At this location a series of flood silts, dating from 13th-14th centuries, were seen to a depth of 1.5-2.5m below the present ground surface (Archaeological Project Services 1995; context groups 9104, 10119 from trenches 9 and 10 respectively).

Cutting into the alluvium were brick cellars (phase 2), beneath both 17 and 19 High Street. These buildings were standing in 1978 (Meldrum Lee and Morris Drawing No. 2198.1 Oct. 1978) but No. 17 had since been demolished and the debris partly used to infill the cellars.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigations at 17/19 High Street, Boston revealed alluvium at 1.8m below the modern ground level. This deposit was undated but, elsewhere in Boston, similar flood silts at comparable

depths have been shown to be 13th-14th century in date. Two brick cellars, that had disturbed much of the site to a depth of c. 1.8m below ground level, were also identified. These were filled with the demolition rubble from the building that formerly occupied No.17 High Street.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project services wish to thank David Cowling of Meldrum Lee and Gillatt who commissioned 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 Assistant: Fiona Walker
Illustration: Denise Buckley
Post-excavation Analyst: Fiona Walker

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Soil Survey of England and Wales Bulletin
No. 13 (Harpenden)

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17/19 High Street, Boston, Lincolnshire.
Drawing Number **2198.1**

Page, W., 1988 *A History of Lincolnshire*
II, The Victoria History of the Counties of
England (Folkestone)

11. ABBREVIATIONS

Numbers prefixed with 'B' are the primary
reference numbers used by the Boston
District Community Archaeologist.

Fig. 1 General Location Plan

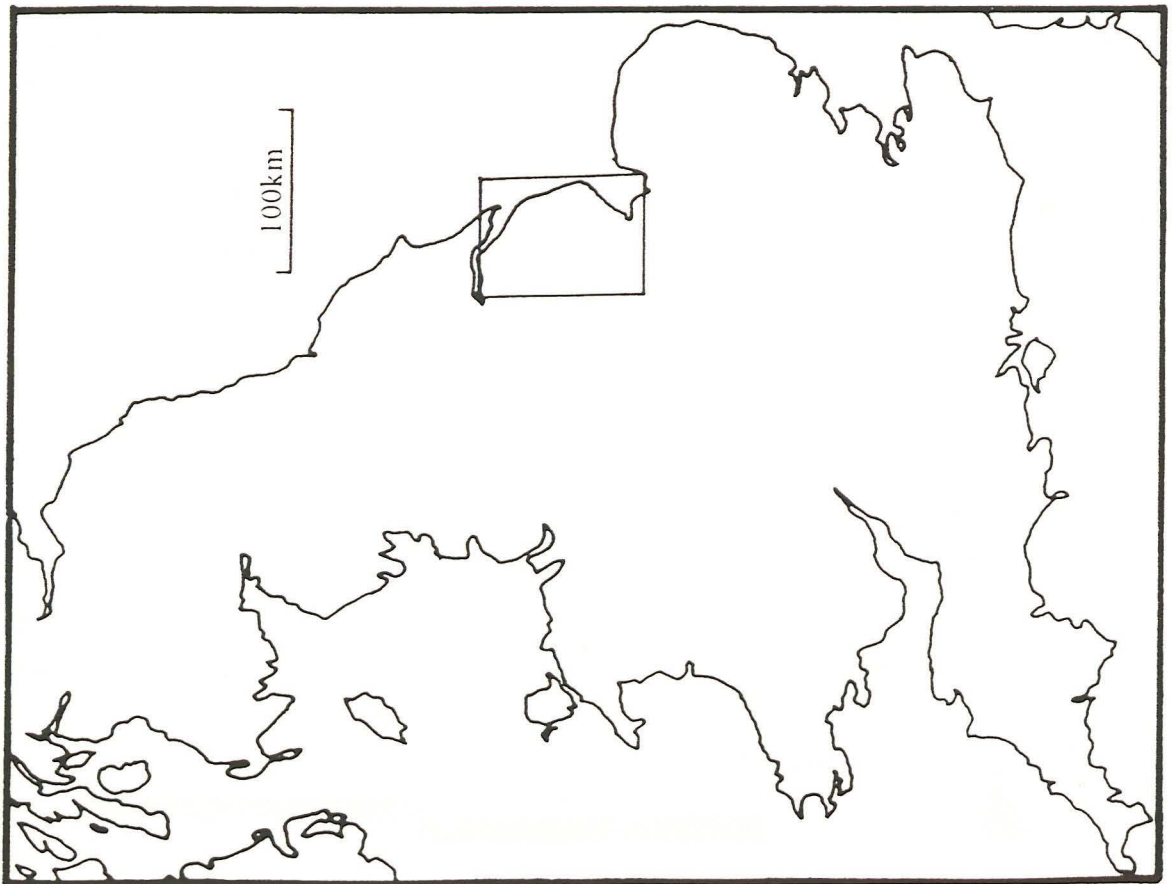
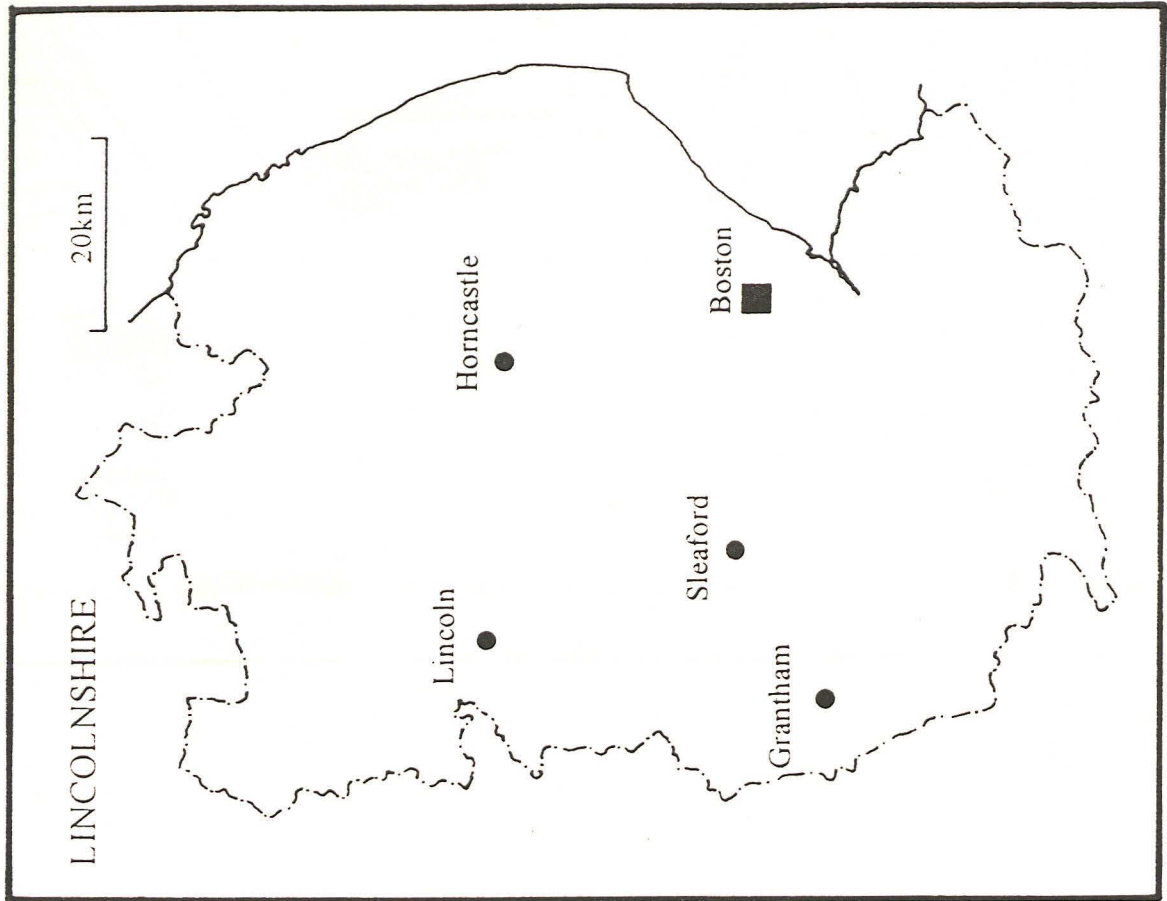
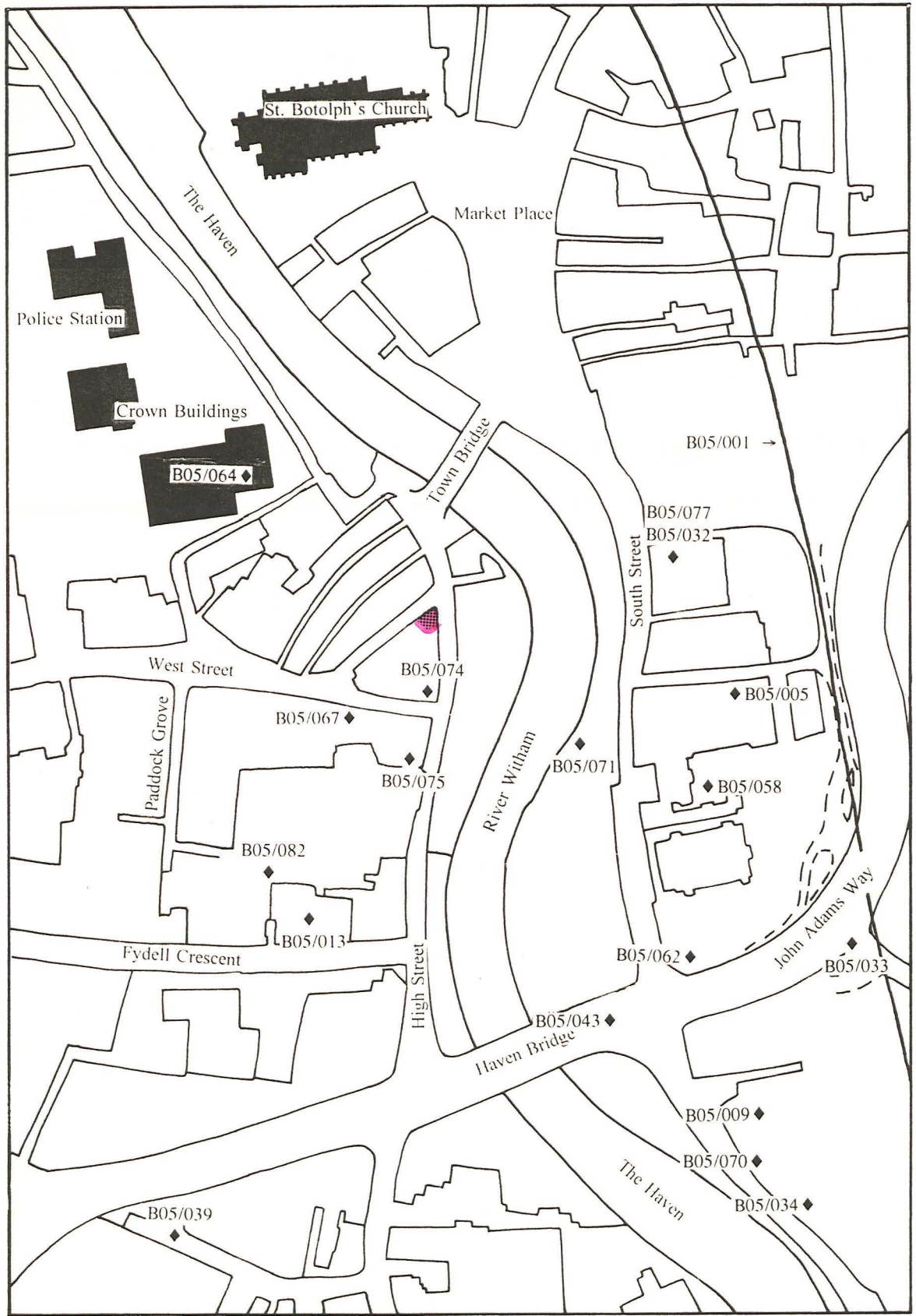
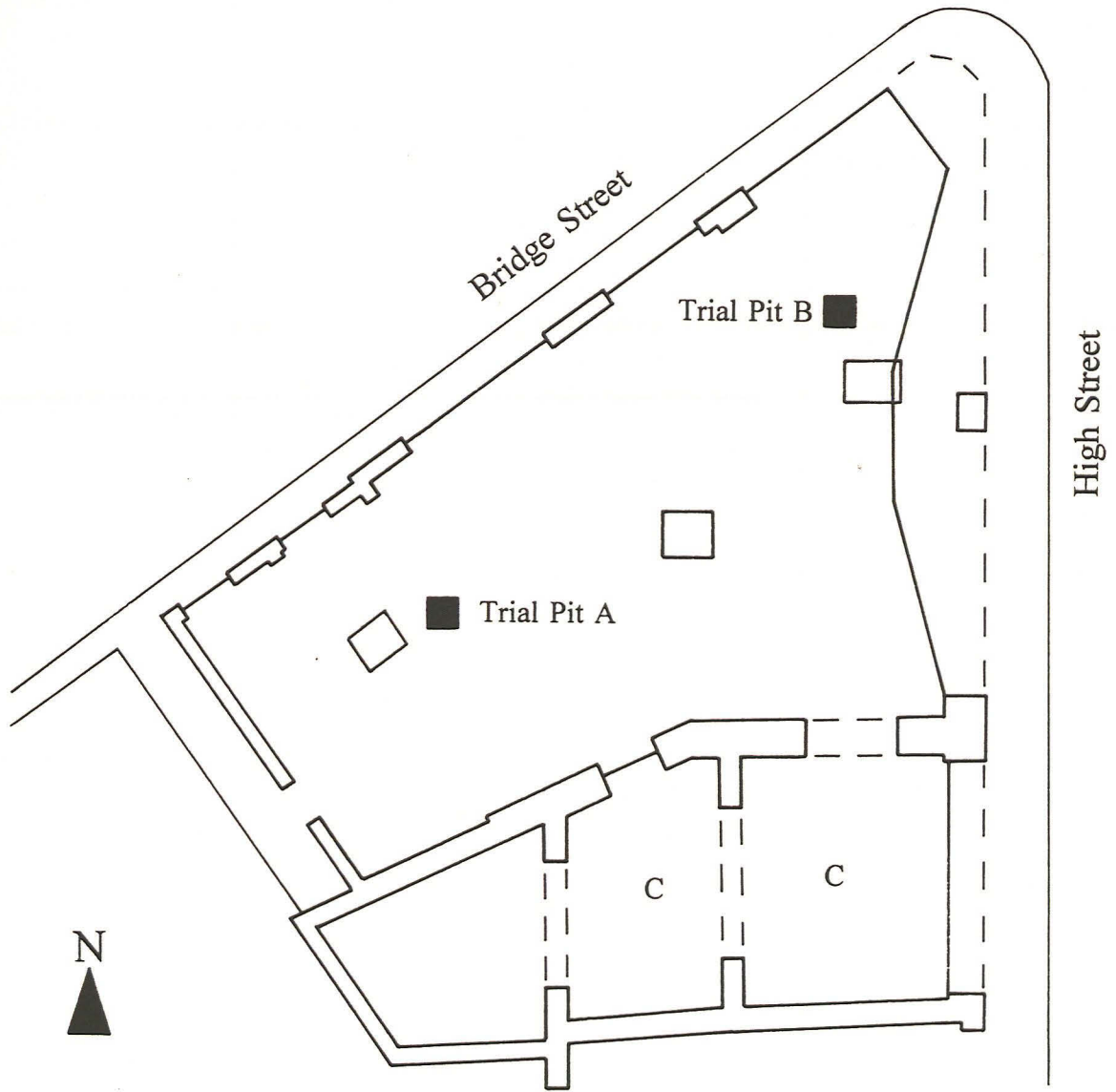


Fig. 2 Site Location Plan



 Investigation Area

Fig. 3 Trial Pits Location Plan



0 10m

C = Known cellars

APPENDIX 1

Context Summary

Context	Area	Description	Interpretation
01	A	Loose brown rubble/brick with brown sandy silt	Demolition material
02	A	Approx. N-S linear brick structure, 0.6m x 0.25m x 0.45m	External brick wall
03	A	Horizontal structure of square alternate black and red tiles	Floor
04	A	Red rubble/bricks with brown clayey silt and grey clay	Demolition material
05	A	Horizontal brick structure	Cellar floor
06	A	Greenish grey silty clay with organic material	Flood alluvium
07	A	Brownish grey sandy/gritty silty clay	Foundation trench fill or land build up
08	B	Red rubble/bricks with brown sandy silt	Demolition material
09	B	Horizontal brick structure	Cellar floor
010	B	Greenish grey silty clay with organic material	Flood alluvium
011	C	Red-brown rubble/brick with brown sandy silt	Demolition material

APPENDIX 2

The Archive

The archive consists of:

- 11 . . Context Records
- 1 . . . Photographic Record
- 1 . . . Site Matrix
- 2 . . . Architects drawings
- 1 . . . Bore hole report

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 16.96
Archaeological Project Services project code BHS96