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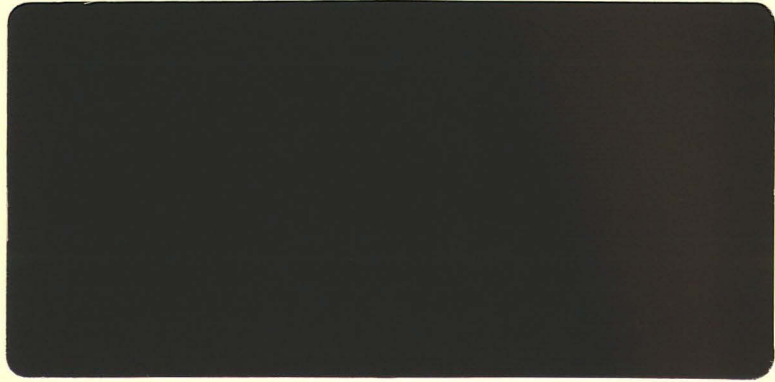
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
OF DEVELOPMENT AT
CATLEY COTTAGES,
WALCOTT,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(WCC96)**



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Source LI 7785

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
OF DEVELOPMENT AT
CATLEY COTTAGES,
WALCOTT,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(WCC96)**

Work Undertaken For
Mr W J Wells

Report Compiled by
Paul Cope-Faulkner

April 1996

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1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the construction of a garage and extension to an existing dwelling at Catley Cottages, Walcott. The watching brief monitored the excavation of the foundations.

In the immediate vicinity is a Bronze Age barrow cemetery containing about 20 barrows with single barrows situated to the south and west.

Lying to the south of the investigation are the remnants of the former priory of Catley. Founded in the mid 12th century the priory belonged to the order of St Gilbert of Sempringham. Recorded as one of the poorest houses of the order the priory surrendered in 1538 during the dissolution.

At the start of this century the priory area became important once again when mineral water was found on the site.

Excavation of the foundation trenches revealed a sequence of natural clay overlain by subsoil and modern topsoil deposits. Deposits associated with the construction of the present Catley Cottages were also found. A single find of a medieval roof tile was recovered during the investigation.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

On January 23rd 1996, an archaeological watching brief was undertaken during development work at Catley Cottages, Walcott. Approval for the development was sought through the submission of planning application N/70/1017/93. Permission was granted subject to a standard negative

condition for archaeological recording. The archaeological work was commissioned by Mr W J Wells, and was carried out by Archaeological Project Services.

2.2 Topography and Geology

Walcott is located 22km southeast of Lincoln and 13km northeast of Sleaford in North Kesteven District, Lincolnshire (Fig.1). Catley Cottages, the area of investigation, is situated on Walcott Common, approximately 1.5km southwest of the village in the civil parish of Walcot (Fig.2).

The site lies on the gently sloping north bank of a northwest-southeast stream valley, about 200m north of the stream, Old Dam. Ground surface is at c. 6m O.D., with a small hillock rising to 8m immediately to the west. Centred on National Grid Reference TF 1183 5572, the development site covers a total area of c. 72 square metres (Fig. 2).

Local soils are the Aswarby Association fine loamy gleyic calcareous earths, developed over cornbrash and great oolite limestones (Hodge *et al.*, 1984, 99).

2.3 Archaeological Setting

Catley Cottages are situated in an area of archaeological activity dating from the prehistoric to the medieval periods.

Prehistoric activity is represented by a large barrow cemetery located c.500m to the east (NK70.6). Comprising about 20 round barrows, these are of probable early Bronze Age date (2250 - 1850 BC). One of these barrows was excavated and revealed a crouched burial of an adult male with two further burials of infants (Healey and Hurcombe 1989, 17-19). Outlying barrows have also been found 300m to the south, 180m to the southeast and 200m to the northwest (NK70.7/8/9). Furthermore, finds

of this date include a greenstone axe, 130m to the south and a bronze flat axe 450m to the northwest (NK70.3 and 70.4 respectively).

Later, the landscape around the barrows became marshy. Peat developed, from which a radiocarbon date in the early-mid first millenium BC was obtained (Chowne 1980, 303). These deteriorating conditions left the land in the river valley to the east of Catley Cottages uninhabitable.

Walcott is mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086 (Foster and Longley 1976). Referred to as 'Walecote', its meaning is the cottage of the serfs. Catley is first mentioned in a Danelaw Charter of Henry II (1154-1189). Though the name Catley can be derived from 'wild cat woods' (Ekwall 1974, 491; 90), the ending 'ey' refers to an island location in this instance.

The Gilbertine priory of St Mary in Catley was founded between 1148 and 1154 by Peter of Billingham. The Gilbertines (named after the founder St Gilbert of Sempringham) were an order of both nuns and brothers adopting a rule similar to that of the Cistercians (Lawrence 1984, 182). Catley priory was always one of the poorest houses of the Order of Sempringham (Page 1906, 196). The house was surrendered during the dissolution in 1538.

All that survives of Catley priory are extensive earthworks to the south of Catley Cottages (NK70.1 and NK70.2). The earthworks in the centre correspond to the presumed site of the church. Located to the south are earthworks indicating possible ditches and watercourses (Anon). The name of the stream, Old Dam, is associated with fisheries and may indicate the presence of fishponds.

In 1909 water was found on the abbey site

at a depth of 80ft, similar in character to the German Seltzer. This mineral water was extracted until 1937 under the name Catley Abbey Natural Seltzer Water Company (Anon).

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.* 1m using a mechanical excavator (Fig.3). 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. Sketch sections and plans were noted where appropriate.

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 Natural deposits
- Phase 2 Modern deposits

Phase 1 Natural deposits

Exposed in both sections recorded was a layer of firm yellowish brown clay (003 and 009). This context was not excavated to its lowest extent, but formed a deposit that was

at least 0.2m thick to the limit of excavation (Fig. 4).

Phase 2 Modern Deposits

Overlying natural clay in section 1, was a layer of dark grey silty clay (002). Measuring 0.9m thick this contained occasional ceramic building material of which a single example of medieval roof tile was retained. This is interpreted as a topsoil deposit.

Cutting topsoil 002 was an east to west linear cut (004). Exposed for a width of 0.3m this was 0.75m deep and was identified as a foundation trench. Constructed within this trench was a stone foundation wall to the present Catley Cottages (006). The foundation trench was backfilled with a brown silty clay containing crushed mortar and broken brick (005).

The foundation trench was sealed with a 80mm thick layer of demolition material (001) associated with the present building work.

Overlying natural deposits in Section 2 was a layer of yellowish brown clayey gravel (008). This was 0.5m thick and is interpreted as a subsoil deposit.

This subsoil was sealed by a dark brown clayey silt (007), the present garden soil.

6. DISCUSSION

Natural deposits (Phase 1) of clay were identified across the area. These are likely to be alluvial in origin, perhaps being deposited in the stream valley that encloses the site.

Phase 2 deposits indicate a natural soil

growth affected in part by the construction of Catley Cottages. Variation in the depth of natural and the lack of subsoil deposits in Section 1 may indicate the presence of some activity not identified in the archaeological examination. The presence of an almost intact medieval roof tile (Appendix 2) may indicate the close proximity of an unidentified building, perhaps belonging to the priory.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigations at Catley Cottages, Walcott have revealed a sequence of natural and modern deposits.

The series of contexts examined and recorded within the foundation trenches revealed a sequence of natural clays of probable alluvial origin.

Subsoil and then topsoil developed over the site. Construction of Catley Cottages was recognised in the form of a foundation trench, wall and backfill. A thin demolition deposit was recognised to be associated with present construction work.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wish to thank Mr W.J. Wells who commissioned the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. Steve Haynes coordinated the work and Tom Lane edited this report. Hilary Healey kindly examined and reported on the finds. Background information was provided by Kate Orr the North Kesteven Heritage Officer who kindly allowed access to the parish files maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Steve Haynes
Site Supervisor: Mark Sansom
Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner
Post-Excavation analyst: Paul Cope-Faulkner

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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11. ABBREVIATIONS

Numbers prefixed 'NK' are the reference codes used by the North Kesteven Heritage Officer for identifying archaeological sites and finds.

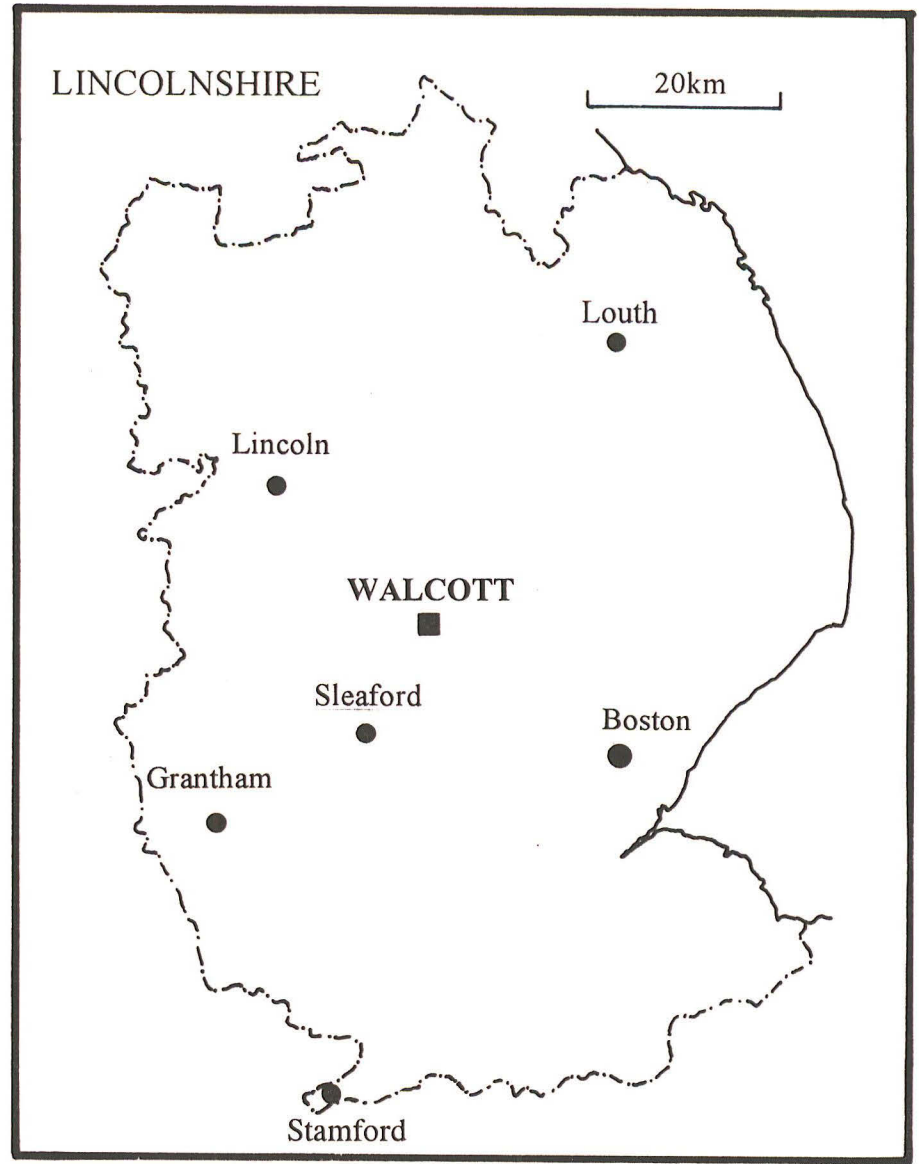
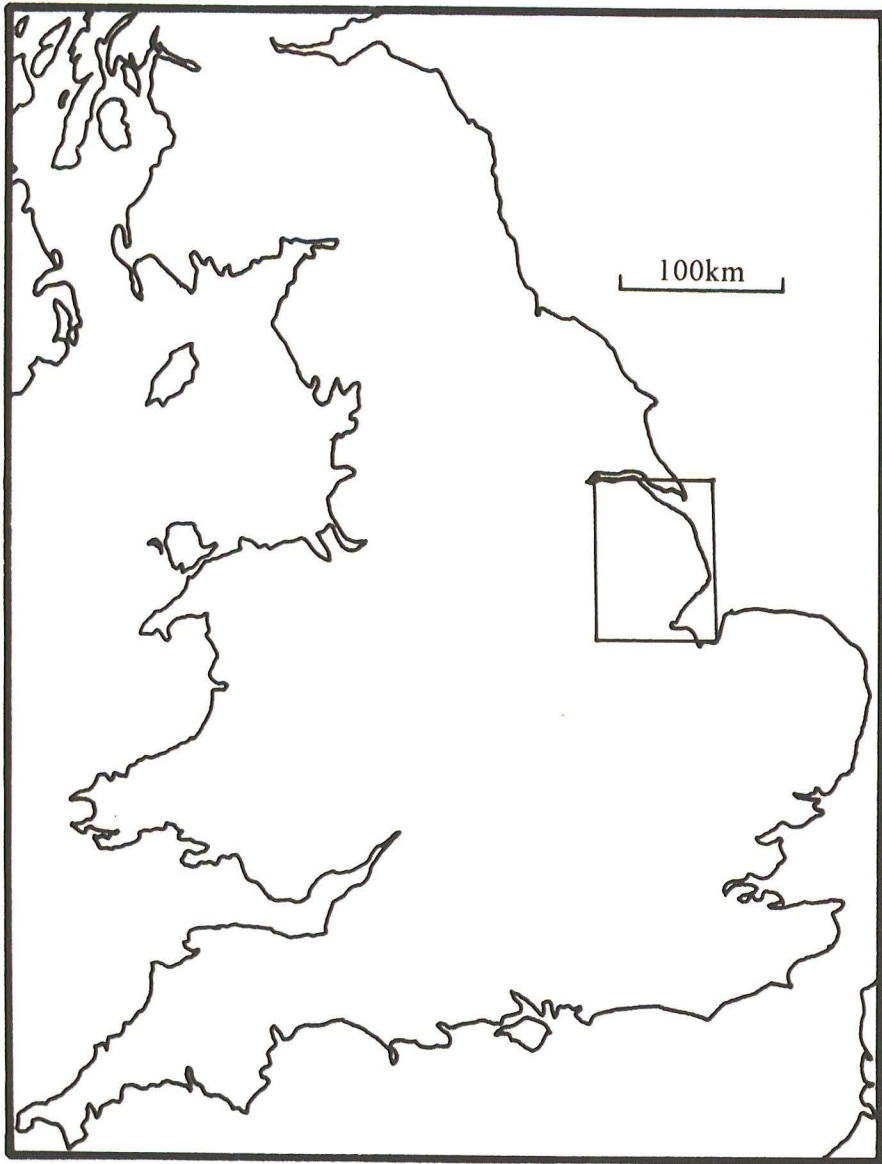
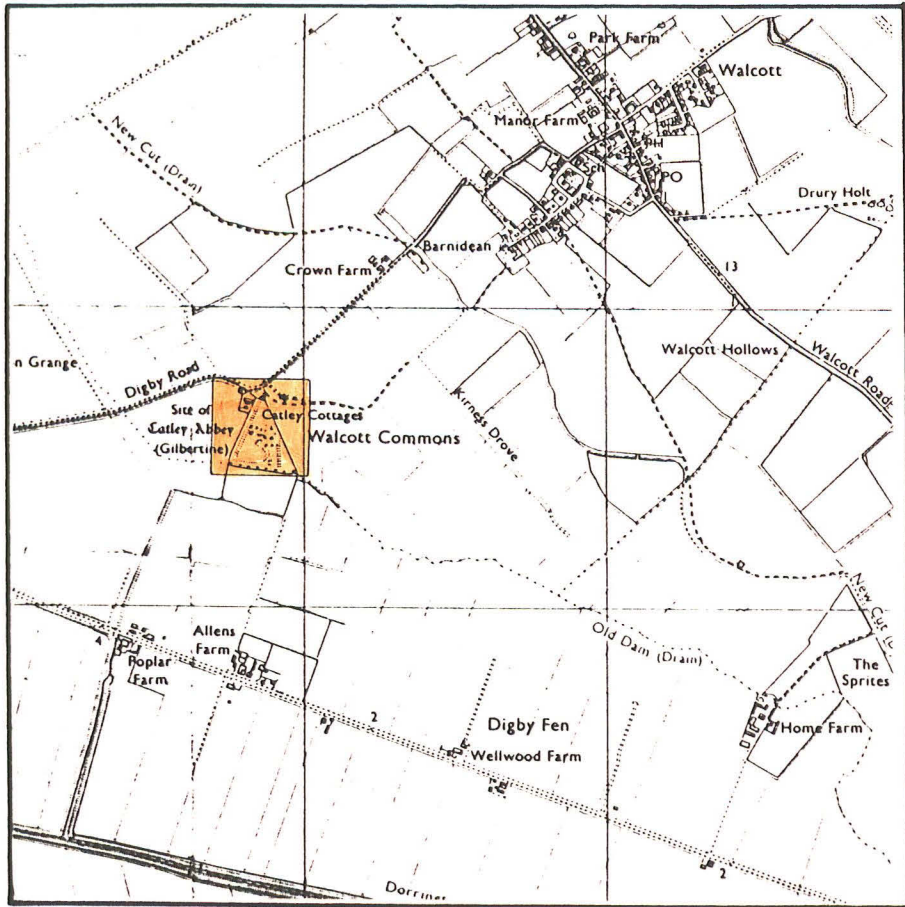


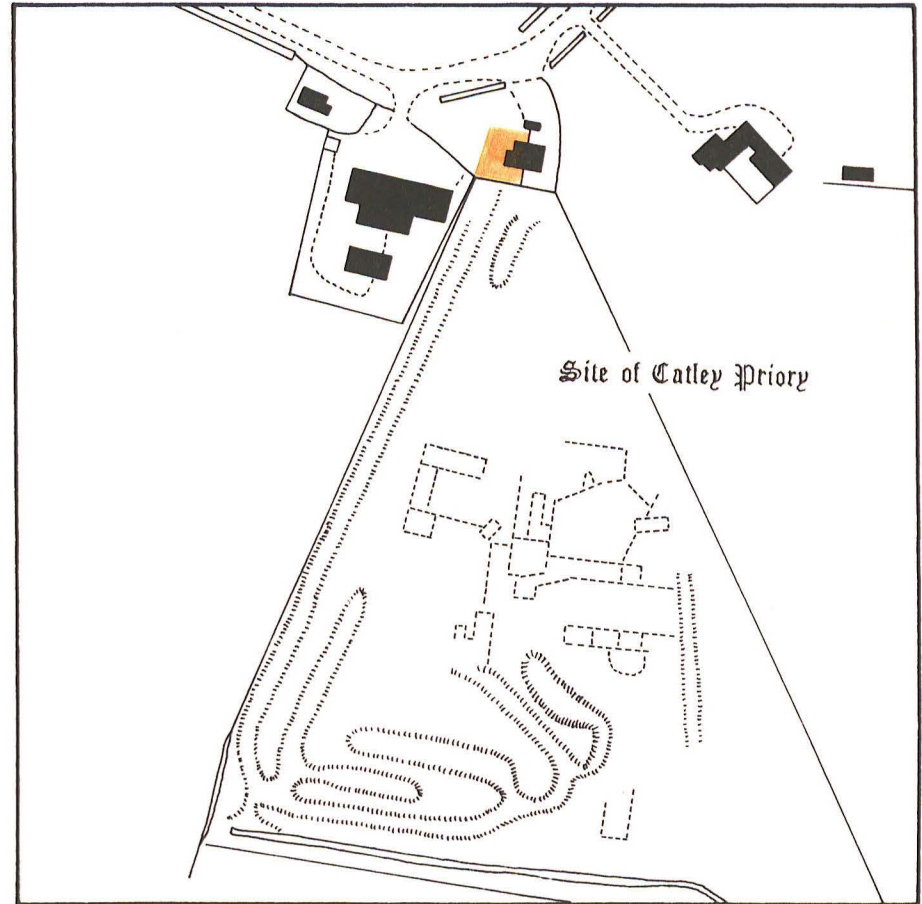
Fig. 1 General Location Plan



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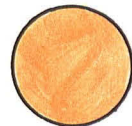
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0 200m



N



Area of Development

Fig. 2 Site Location Plan

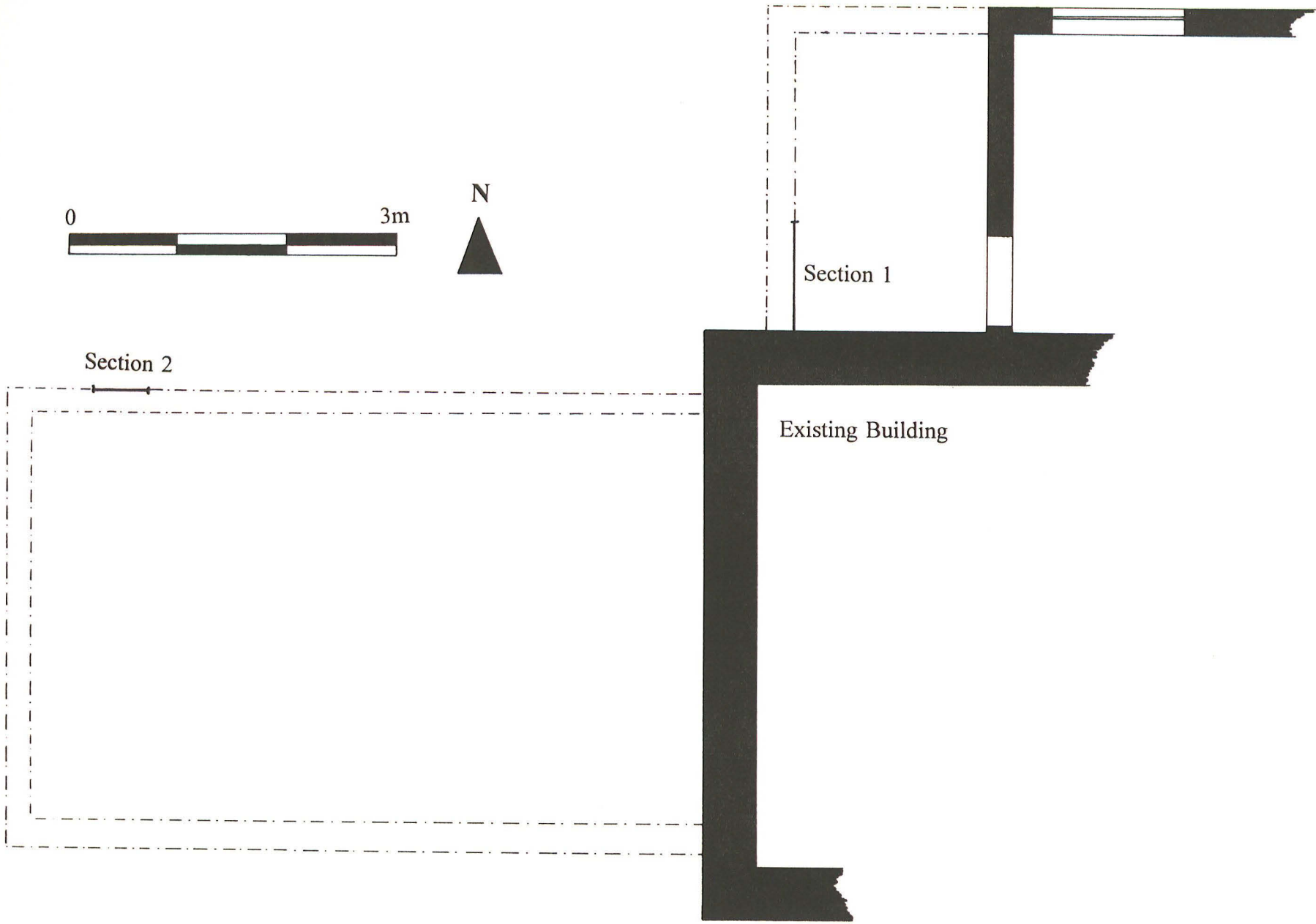
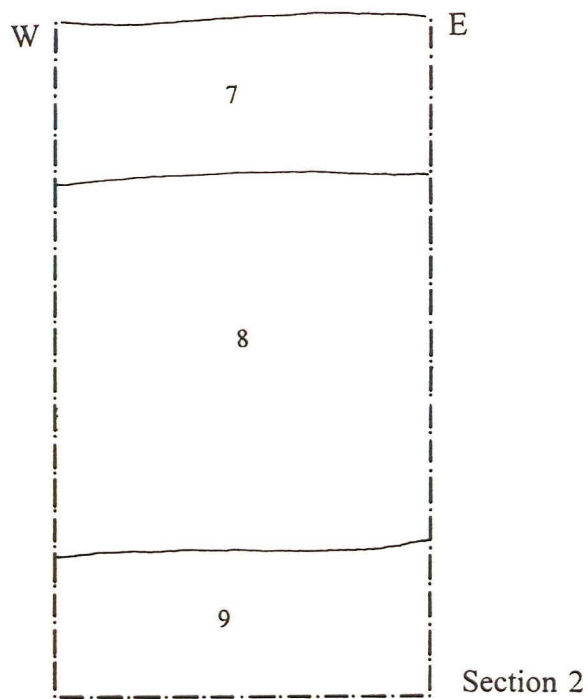
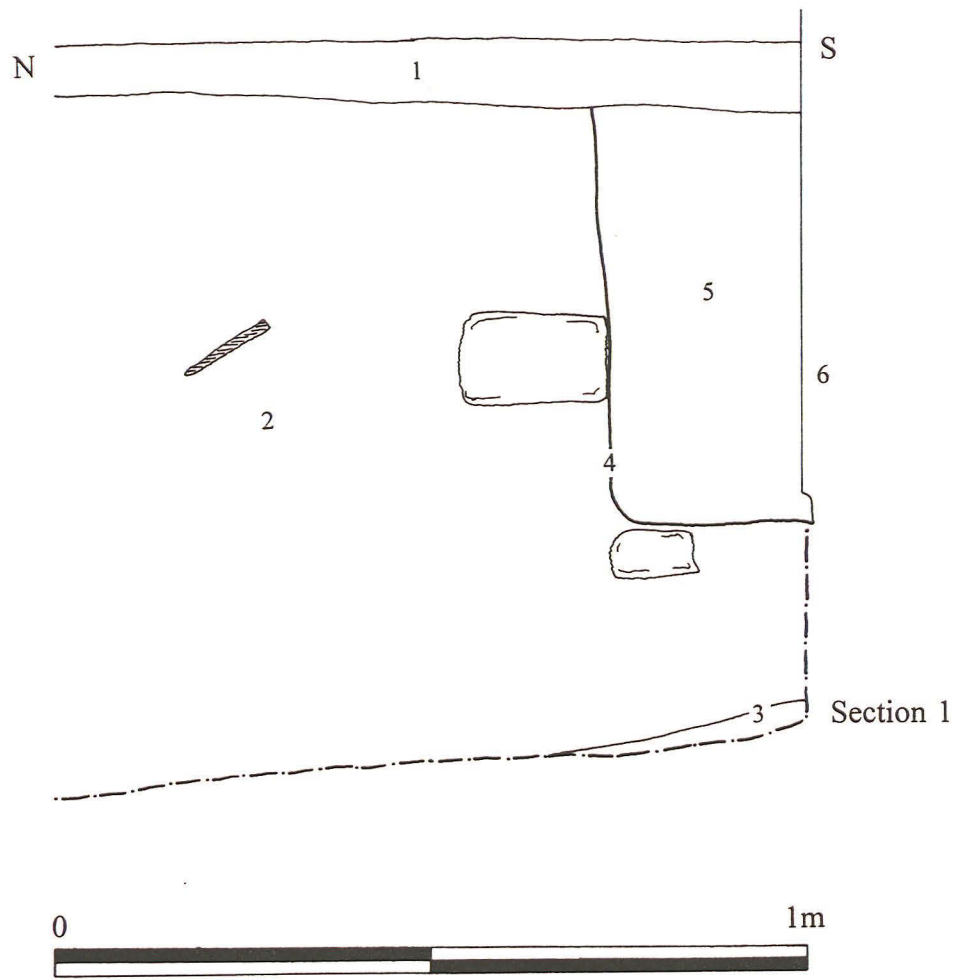


Fig. 3 Plan of Development

Fig. 4 Sections 1 and 2



APPENDIX 1

Context Summary

Context Number	Area	Description	Interpretation
001	kitchen extension, section 1	Mixed yellow, grey and red sand and brick	Demolition layer
002	kitchen extension, section 1	Dark grey silty clay with tile fragments	Indeterminate layer; containing possible demolition debris
003	kitchen extension, section 1	Yellow-brown clay	Natural
004	kitchen extension, section 1	E-W linear cut, 0.3m wide, 0.75m deep	Foundation trench for extant cottage
005	kitchen extension, section 1	Brown sandy mortar with silty clay and tile fragments	Fill of 004, backfill of foundation trench
006	kitchen extension, section 1	E-W stone wall	Fill of 004, foundations of extant cottage
007	garage extension, section 2	Dark brown clayey silt with roots	Garden soil
008	garage extension, section 2	Yellow-brown clayey gravel	Make-up layer
009	garage extension, section 2	Yellow-brown clay	Natural

APPENDIX 2

The Ceramic Tile
by
Hilary Healey, MPhil

A single example of a ceramic roof tile was retained during the archaeological investigations at Catley Cottages, Walcott. The tile is a medieval-type, flat roof tile with a lug and a hole. It is likely to have been made on a site belonging to the adjacent Catley Priory, as religious houses often had their own tile production sites. Moreover, remains of a tile-making kiln have been found on the southeast side of the priory precincts. However, this kiln produced glazed floor-tiles for use in the church and is thought to have been the work of itinerant tile-makers (Pevsner and Harris 1989, 779).

Reference

Pevsner, N., and Harris, J., 1989 *Lincolnshire*, The Buildings of England (2nd ed., revised Antram, N.)

APPENDIX 3

The Archive

The archive consists of:

- 9 Context records
- 2 Scale drawings
- 1 Stratigraphic matrix
- 1 Bag of finds

All primary records and finds are currently kept at:

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

Archaeological Project Services project code: WCC96
City and County Museum, Lincoln Accession Number: 43.96

APPENDIX 4

Glossary

- Context** An archaeological context represents a distinct archaeological event or process. For example, the action of digging a pit creates a context (the cut) as does the process of its subsequent backfill (the fill). Each context encountered during an archaeological investigation is allocated a unique number by the archaeologist and a record sheet detailing the description and interpretation of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, *e.g.* (004).
- Cut** A cut refers to the physical action of digging a posthole, pit, ditch, foundation trench, *etc.* Once the fills of these features are removed during an archaeological investigation the original 'cut' is therefore exposed and subsequently recorded.
- Dumped deposits** These are deposits, often laid down intentionally, that raise a land surface. They may be the result of casual waste disposal or may be deliberate attempts to elevate the ground surface for drainage or other purposes.
- Fill** Once a feature has been dug it begins to silt up (either slowly or rapidly) or it can be back-filled manually. The sediments and soil(s) which become contained by the 'cut' are referred to as its fill(s).
- Layer** A layer is a term used to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
- Natural** Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity.