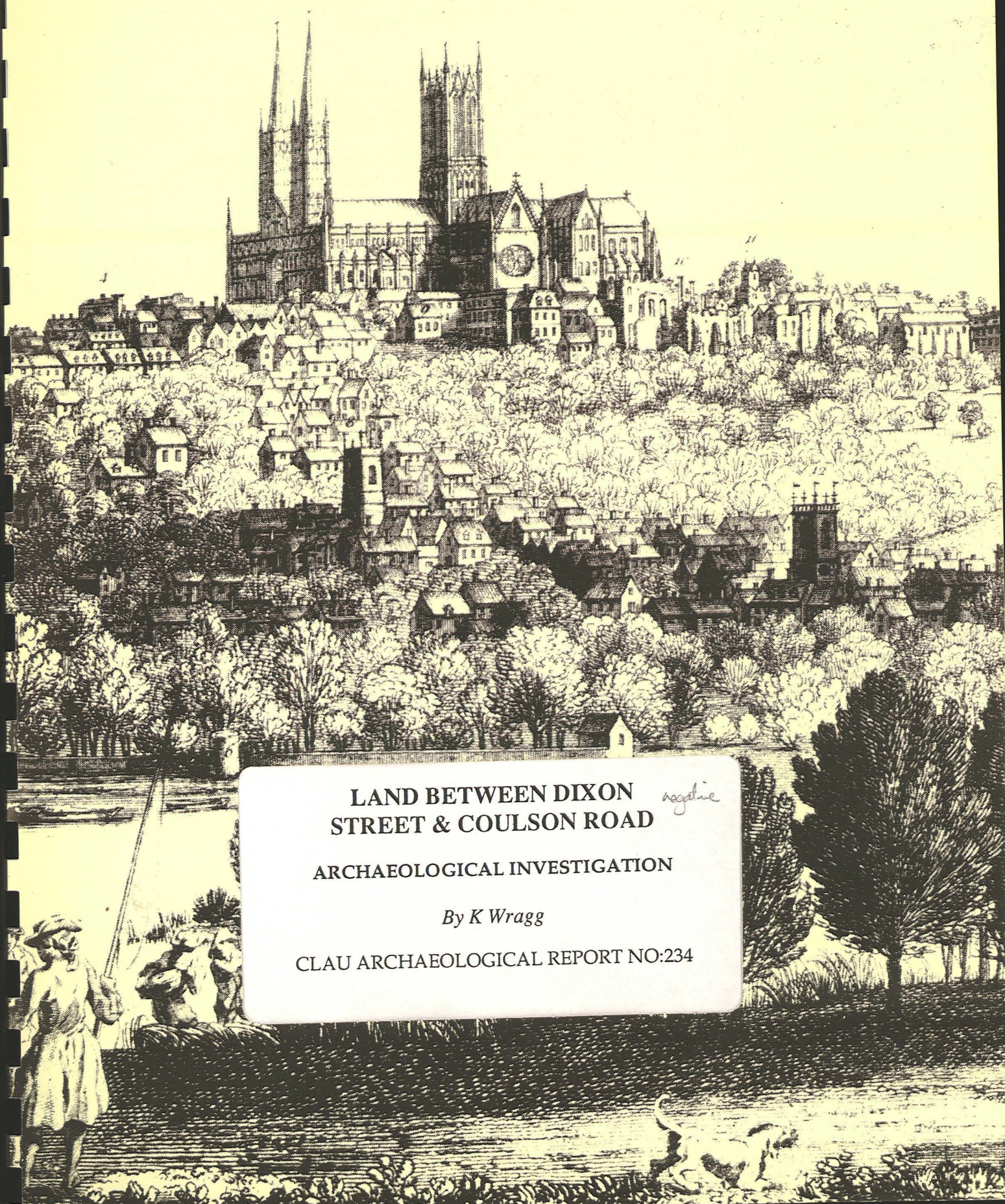


96/5

CITY OF
◇ LINCOLN ARCHAEOLOGY ◇
UNIT



LAND BETWEEN DIXON
STREET & COULSON ROAD

negative

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

By K Wragg

CLAU ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT NO:234

A
Report to
Pelham Construction Ltd

March 1996

Prepared by

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LAND BETWEEN DIXON STREET & COULSON ROAD, LINCOLN

Archaeological Investigation

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LAND BETWEEN DIXON STREET & COULSON ROAD, LINCOLN

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Re-development proposals for this site involved the construction of 56 detached & semi-detached residential dwellings, together with associated services and access roads, and a new car-park for the neighbouring Naval Club, on land formerly occupied by a pre-cast concrete works, and a railway embankment (part of the disused Lincoln Avoiding Line).

Given the waterlogged nature of parts of the site, it was proposed that all buildings would use a raft-type foundation, supported by networks of mini-piles. The associated roads and car-parking, however, would have to bear on sound bearing strata, and it was this aspect of the groundworks that held the greatest potential in archaeological terms, as extensive excavation was thought likely to be necessary, at least in the locations of isolated "soft-spots".

In view of the possible presence of archaeological remains on the site associated with both the River Witham, and the Roman pottery industry known to be present in this general area, it was decided that all groundworks should be monitored by means of an archaeological watching brief, and Planning Consent was conditioned accordingly.

As a result, during April 1993, the City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit (C.L.A.U.) was commissioned by Pelham Construction Ltd to carry out the required watching brief in conjunction with groundworks at the above site.

The archaeological response was carried out in two "phases", the first taking place in May 1993, associated with consolidation works for the Naval Club car-park, and the second in

November 1995, prompted by excavations for the main access roads across the site.

The information in this document is presented with the proviso that further data may yet emerge. The Unit, its members and employees cannot, therefore, be held responsible for any loss, delay or damage, material or otherwise, arising out of this report. The document has been prepared in accordance with the terms of the Unit's Articles of Association, the Code of Conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists, and *The Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage, 1991).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Historical evidence

Lincoln lies over several well-defined geological zones. The City itself is situated at a gap in the Jurassic limestone ridge (known as the "Lincoln Edge") which contains the course of the river Witham. Further south the clays are covered with a river terrace sand while the Witham valley contains a complex sequence of Pleistocene and Holocene gravels, silts and clays. Reclamation has taken place along the banks of both the Witham and Brayford Pool since the Roman period.

To the east of Lincoln, chance finds have indicated a rich Iron Age culture, and several important objects were found in dredging operations along the River Witham, which lies immediately to the east of the area under consideration.

On historical evidence, the Roman army may have reached Lincoln by c.A.D.50 and by A.D.96 Lincoln had the status of a "colonia", utilizing the uphill site of the Neronian fortress. During the 2nd century a Roman suburb developed to the south of the city wall encompassing the area known as Wigford. This suburb grew and prospered well into the 4th century.

Abandonment of the Roman city seems to have taken place gradually during the 4th Century with former urban life reduced to a small community between the 5th and 9th centuries. Following the Viking take-over of Lindsey in 874, Lincoln became a "Viking"

town which grew quickly during the 10th century.

The City continued to develop during the Early Medieval period with the Wigford suburb extending towards the St.Catherine's area, and becoming an increasingly important area for trade.

2.2 Archaeological evidence

Only limited archaeological work has been carried out in this area of the city, and as a result our understanding of the previous land-use is limited. It is known however, that this area was once the location for a widespread pottery manufacturing industry during the Roman period.

Approximately 12 Roman pottery kilns are known in the Boultham, Bracebridge, and Swanpool areas (lying 2-3km to the S.W. of the south gate of the Roman Lower City), and casual finds may indicate several more (see Fig.1). The kiln at Rookery Lane appears to be earlier than the six found at Swanpool, but in general the earliest pottery (appearing to date from the 3rd century A.D.) has been discovered on the site of the St.Helens cemetery (to the south of Dixon Street).

It was accordingly considered a possibility that further remains associated with pottery making might be revealed by the proposed groundwork, and in addition to the remains of the manufacturing industry itself, it was also possible that evidence for associated suburban occupation might be preserved, together with information about transportation and/or distribution (it appears likely that the industry was situated in this location to take advantage of the transportation opportunities afforded by the nearby River Witham, Ermine Street and Fosse Way).

A great deal of research remains to be done on the Swanpool/Rookery Lane kilns, and it was hoped that, in addition to possible structural remains, this project might also provide further information about the location of the clay sources used in the manufacturing process, and might provide artefacts to allow the kiln products to be more closely dated (all refs. Darling, 1977).

3.0 RESULTS

Although the groundworks covered a relatively wide area, the probability of encountering substantial archaeological remains was somewhat low. This was ultimately borne out by the results, which revealed no signs of archaeological occupation in the areas investigated.

While the works required for the removal of "soft-spots" in the area of the car-park only reached depths of c.800mm below the existing ground level, excavations and stripping for the access roads resulted in trenches between 7.0m and 10.0m wide, and up to 4.5m deep, which extended across most of the site (N-S).

The resulting stratigraphy appeared fairly constant across the whole area, and comprised a series of alternating bands of sand and peat. The earliest deposit encountered was a mid grey sand layer, which appeared at approximately 3.8m below the existing ground level, and continued to the limit of excavation (L.O.E.), at c.4.0m deep. This deposit was overlain by a 1.0m thick layer of dark grey-black, very sandy, peat.

Above this was a series of five alternating layers of mid-light yellow/orange-brown mottled sand, and mid grey-brown/rich brown-black organic deposits (3 sand; 2 peat), which in total was approximately 2.8m thick. The sand appeared to contain no obvious inclusions, but the peat layers contained obvious organic remains, appearing to be fragments of rushes or reeds. On average the sand deposits were approximately 800mm thick, while the peats were much thinner, at around 200mm. The uppermost sand deposit formed the surface/topsoil layer for the whole site, and contained assorted modern rubbish and extant rough groundcover.

The only deviation from this pattern was recorded at the S.W. corner of the site, where the upper 3.0m of the stratigraphy consisted of a mixed mid yellow-brown sandy earth, containing frequent modern brick and concrete inclusions, which sealed the previously described dark grey-black sandy peat layer. This deposit appears to be associated with the pre-cast concrete works that formerly occupied the site.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

Notwithstanding the potential of the site, as related above, the results from this watching brief have proved to be largely negative, with no evidence of any archaeological features or finds predating the 20th century. This of course has only been confirmed in the areas investigated during this project, and does not preclude the survival of archaeological remains in neighbouring locations.

5.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit would like to thank the following for their assistance during this project: Messrs C.Brogden, B.J.Coxhead, M.R.Jackson and R.Stewart of Pelham Construction Ltd, Building & Civil Engineering Contractors, Dixon Street, Lincoln, LN6 7TU; Messrs P.Morley & M.Newborn of Morley-Newborn Architectural Technicians, 16a Portland Street, Lincoln, LN5 7JX.

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7.0 LHA NOTE/ARCHIVE DETAILS

7.1 LHA NOTE DETAILS

CLAU CODE: CR95

PLANNING APPLICATION NOS.:

LG34/0499/92; LG34/0500/92; LG34/0354/94

FIELD OFFICER: K.Wragg

NGR: SK 9685/7025

CIVIL PARISH: Lincoln

SMR No.:

DATE OF INTERVENTION: 12/05/93 - 29/11/95

TYPE OF INTERVENTION: Watching Brief

UNDERTAKEN FOR: Pelham Construction Ltd, Building & Civil Engineering Contractors, Dixon Street, Lincoln, LN6 7TU

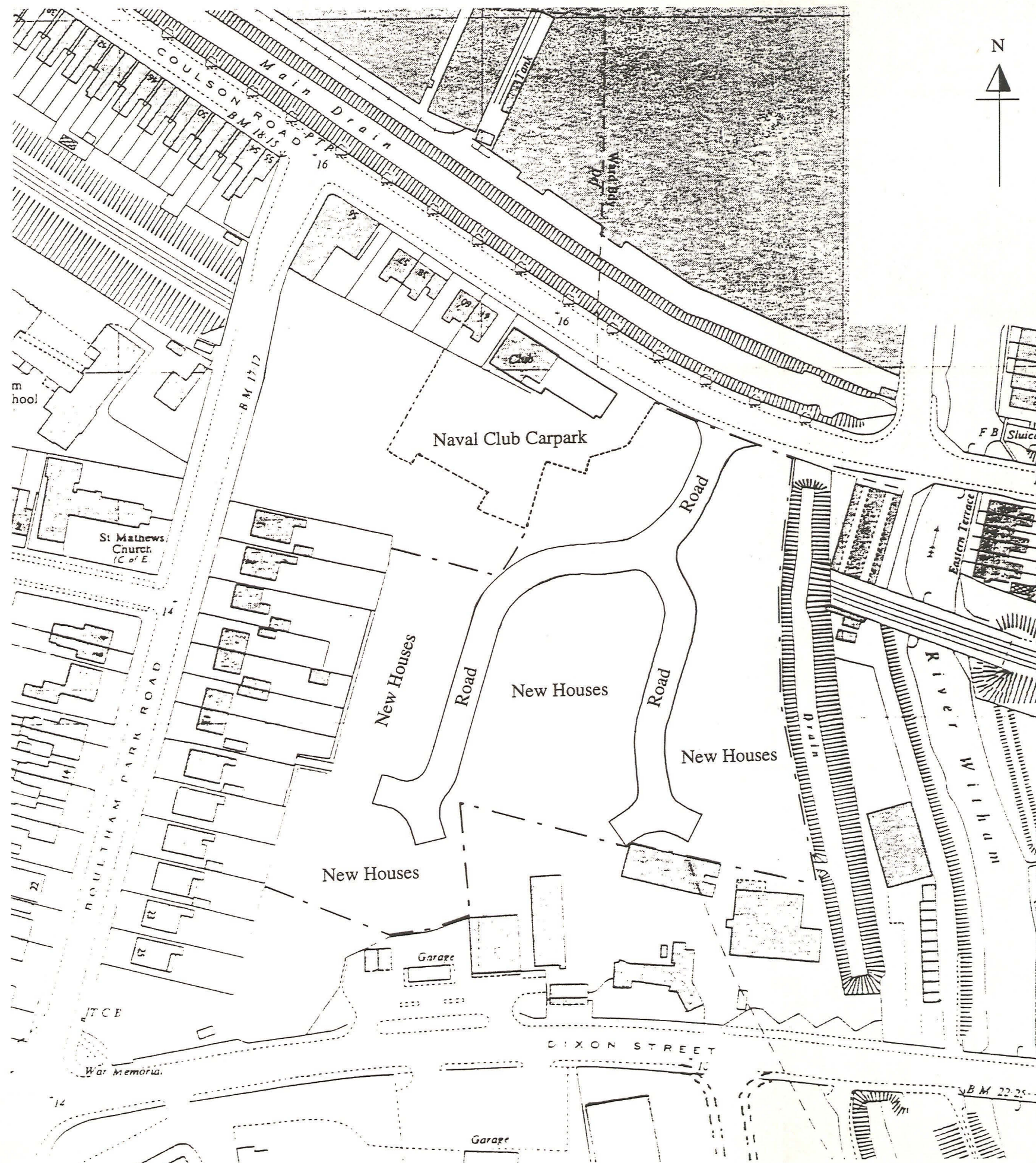
7.2 ARCHIVE DETAILS

PRESENT LOCATION: City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit, Charlotte House, The Lawn, Union Road, Lincoln, LN1 3BL.

FINAL LOCATION: The City and County Museum, Friars Lane, Lincoln.

MUSEUM ACCESSION No.: 82.95

ACCESSION DATE:



| CITY OF LINCOLN ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| SITE CODE: CR95 | PLAN/ELEV/SECTION NO: | |
| CLIENT: Pelham Construction Ltd. | | |
| DESCRIPTION: | Site Location Plan | |
| SCALE: 1:1250 | ARCHIVE NO: | |
| DRAWN BY: | CHECKED: | DATE: 29/03/96 |
| MUSEUM ACCESSION NO: 82.95 | | |

Based upon the 1968 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office, © Crown copyright.

Fig.1