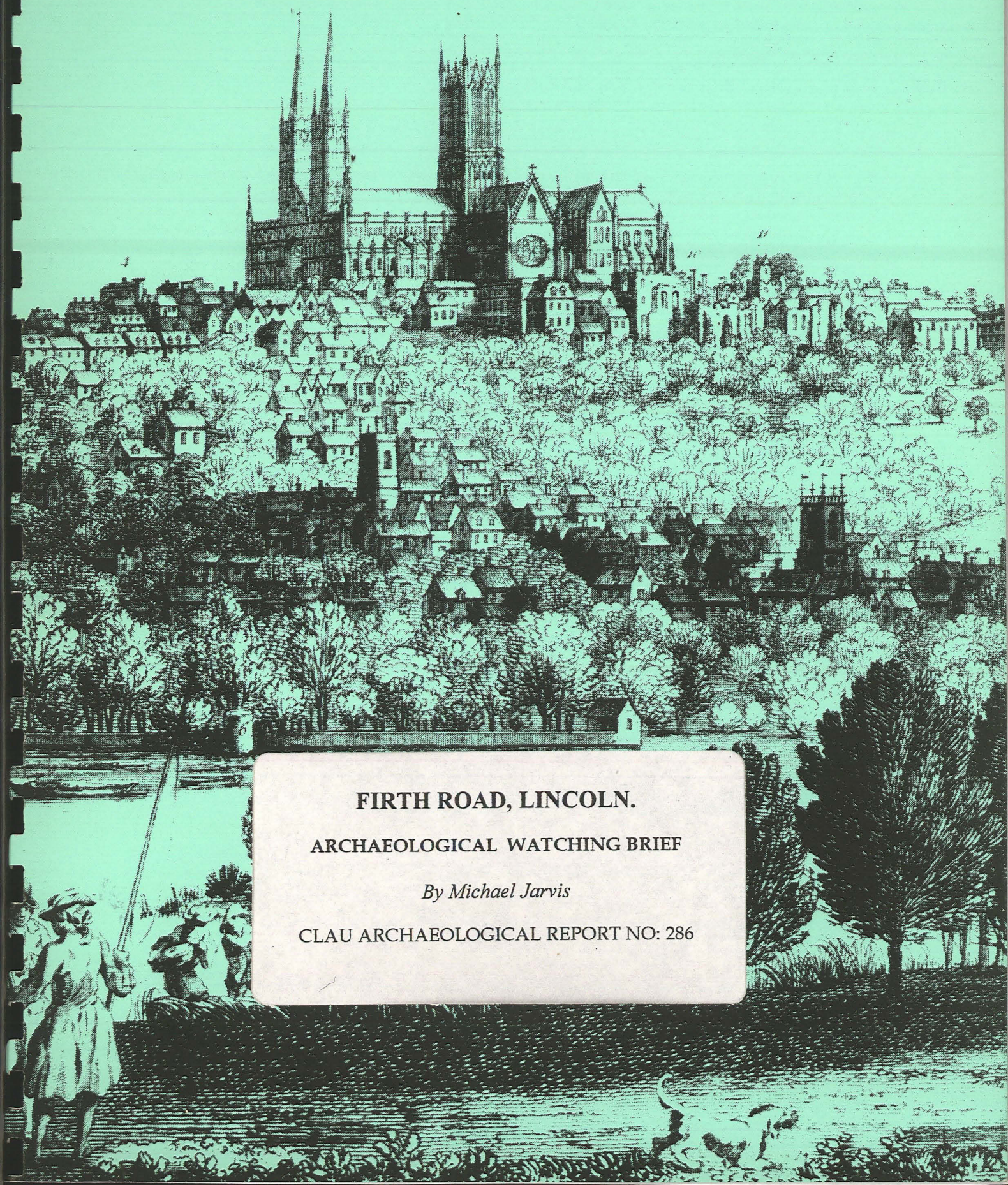


CITY OF
◇ LINCOLN ARCHAEOLOGY ◇
UNIT



FIRTH ROAD, LINCOLN.

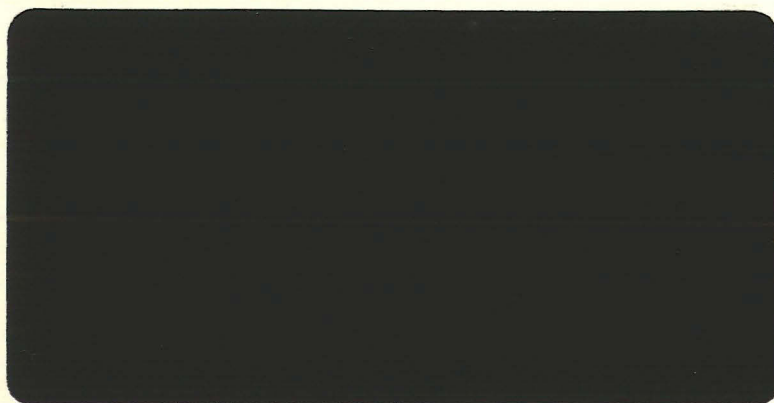
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

By Michael Jarvis

CLAU ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT NO: 286

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A
Report to
Lincoln City Council

November, 1996.

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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FIRTH ROAD, LINCOLN.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

SUMMARY

Between October and November, 1996, representatives from the City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit undertook an archaeological watching brief for the City Engineer & Surveyor's Department of Lincoln City Council, during a programme of reconstruction to Firth Road, Lincoln.

The site lay in an area where archaeological investigations have revealed important remains from the Roman to Medieval periods.

Elements of the reconstruction programme included the resurfacing of the carriageway and the formation of footways. Other, potentially more destructive elements to the programme included the excavation of trenches to connect surface water channels to an existing main.

The limited extent of groundworks resulted in few definite conclusions being made regarding the nature of the archaeological deposits observed during the archaeological programme of investigation. No finds were recovered during the works: therefore interpretation and dating was based on our previous understanding of the site from other archaeological investigations in the locality.

In the main, those deposits encountered were associated with the construction of Firth Road and/or the Midland Railway and date from around the mid 19th century.

FIRTH ROAD, LINCOLN.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Between October and November, 1996, representatives from the City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit (CLAU), undertook an archaeological watching brief for the City Engineer & Surveyor's Department of Lincoln City Council, during a programme of reconstruction to Firth Road, Lincoln.

1.1 Background

The reconstruction works form part of the adjacent St. Marks redevelopment and were undertaken by Lincoln City Council under a Section 278 Agreement, whereby the City Council could carry out, on behalf of a private developer, works which affect a Highway.

2.0 SITE LOCATION

Firth Road (the site) is located in the Wigford area of Lincoln and is bounded by the High Street to the east, the River Witham to the west, and the former St. Mark's station site to the north, National Grid Reference SK 9750 7054 (Fig. 1).

2.1 Archaeological & Historical Background

Although no archaeological investigation has previously been carried on the site, several elements of the St. Mark's station site have been investigated.

The results from this work indicate that the former railway station site was originally part of a Roman commercial suburb lying to the south of the main defensive area, with properties fronting on to Ermine Street (High Street).

Post-Roman activity has also been recorded and suggests the area was occupied from the early 10th century. Between the mid-10th and mid-11th centuries large scale land reclamation took place. Evidence of timber buildings ascribed to this period has also been

recorded lying on both sides of the High Street.

Twelfth century occupation of the area included the construction of a lane extending west from the High Street, lying approximately between the then station platforms. In or around 1269 the land to the north of the lane became part of a Carmelite Friary (until c. 1539). Between the 14th to 15th centuries the lane went out of use.

A parish church dedicated to St. Edward the Martyr lay on the south-east corner of the present St. Mark's station site close to the modern junction of High Street and Firth Road. The date of its establishment is not known, but it seems likely that it was founded during the Norman Conquest and dissolved in the 16th century. The extent of this church and lands is unclear, however, excavations on the site of the church in 1996 suggested that its associated burial ground may extend under the modern line of Firth Road.

Post-medieval levels have been truncated by the construction of the Midland Railway which opened in 1846, and from this date the majority of the occupation on the site was mainly concerned with the expansion and use for railway purposes.

3.0 AIMS & METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims

The aims of the watching brief were:

A. to produce an archive record of deposits and remains generally within the constraints of the groundwork contractors' working methods and programme as related to the project design, with due regard to current Health and Safety legislation.

B. to produce a report on the archaeological importance of the discoveries.

C. to produce a project archive from which the potential for further study and academic research could be assessed.

D. to provide information for accession to the County Sites and Monuments Record.

3.2 Archaeological Methodology

The archaeological record was secured by means of trench side notes. Scale drawings of archaeological features were made and a full photographic record compiled.

All artefacts and other materials recovered and retained from the investigations were packed and stored in the appropriate materials and conditions to ensure that minimum deterioration took place and that their associated records were complete.

4.0 ANALYSIS

The following information sets out the main elements of the reconstruction works and where appropriate, analysis of the resulting archaeological record.

Reconstruction work to Firth Road consisted of the following major elements:

a) The construction of footways to both sides of the carriageway.

This work was in the main contained within 500mm of ground level. Those deposits encountered appeared to be associated with the construction of Firth Road and/or the railway.

b) the removal and replacement of the existing road surface.

Stripping the existing road surface was commenced at the western end of the site. Approximately 400mm-500mm of material was removed. This revealed deposits associated with earlier resurfacing of the roadway and/or the railway.

c) the connection of surface water channels to an existing main.

This element was potentially the most likely to produce archaeological deposits and features.

In the event, observations made during this work revealed no definite deposits pre-dating the construction of the railway.

d) the excavation of trenches designed to accommodate ducting for cable based communication systems.

This work formed part of Diamond Cable Communications' (DC) ongoing cable laying scheme for the city. The trench required for this ducting was excavated by the highway contractor.

As with the majority of the reconstruction works, this element was generally contained within 500mm of ground level and revealed no definite archaeological deposits.

No further deposits were recorded during the reconstruction programme.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

The limited extent of groundworks associated with the reconstruction works has meant that few conclusions can be made regarding the nature of the archaeological deposits observed. No finds were recovered from the works therefore interpretation and dating is based on our previous understanding of the site in relation to other archaeological investigations in the locality.

In the main, those deposits encountered were in all likelihood associated with the construction of Firth Road and/or the Midland Railway and date from around the mid 19th century.

Earlier investigations in the area of the site revealed archaeological deposits to lie approximately 600mm below ground level (dropping deeper further to the west of the High Street/Firth Roads junction).

6.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit would like to thank Lincolnshire City Council for funding the watching brief and post-field work analysis. CLAU also wish to thank Adam Winfield, City Engineers & Surveyors Department and the site contractor UCS for their full co-operation throughout the duration of the archaeological works.

7.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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NOTE

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.

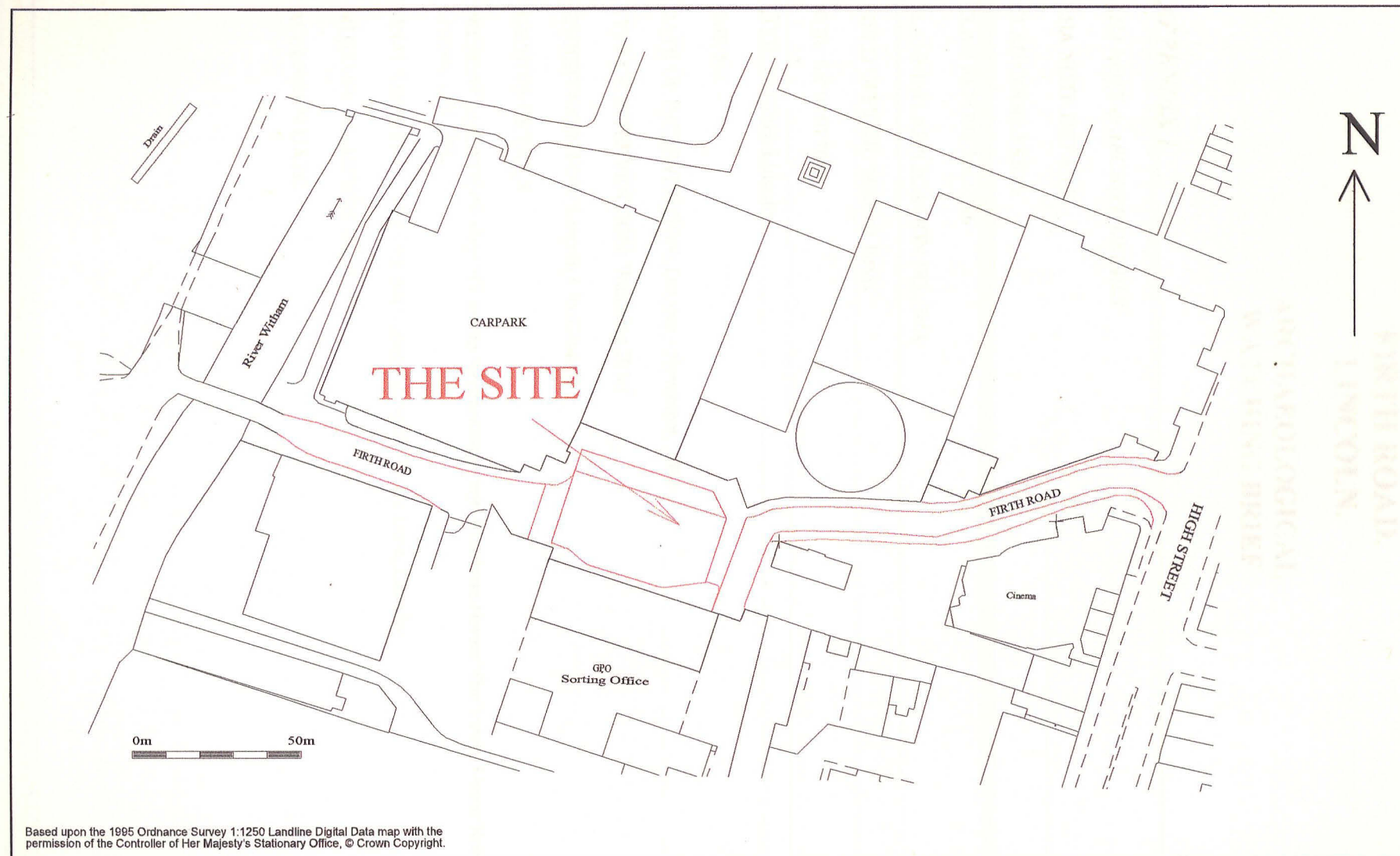


Fig. 1: General site location plan.

**FIRTH ROAD,
LINCOLN.**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF**

APPENDIX 1

LHA NOTE & ARCHIVE DETAILS

LHA NOTE DETAILS

CLAU CODE: FRR96

CLAU REPORT No.: 286

PLANNING APPLICATION NO.: N/A

FIELD OFFICER: Michael Jarvis

NGR: SK 9750 7054.

CIVIL PARISH: Lincoln

SMR No.: -

DATE OF INTERVENTION: October - November, 1996

TYPE OF INTERVENTION: Watching Brief

UNDERTAKEN FOR: Lincoln City Council

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.: 139.96

ACCESSION DATE: -