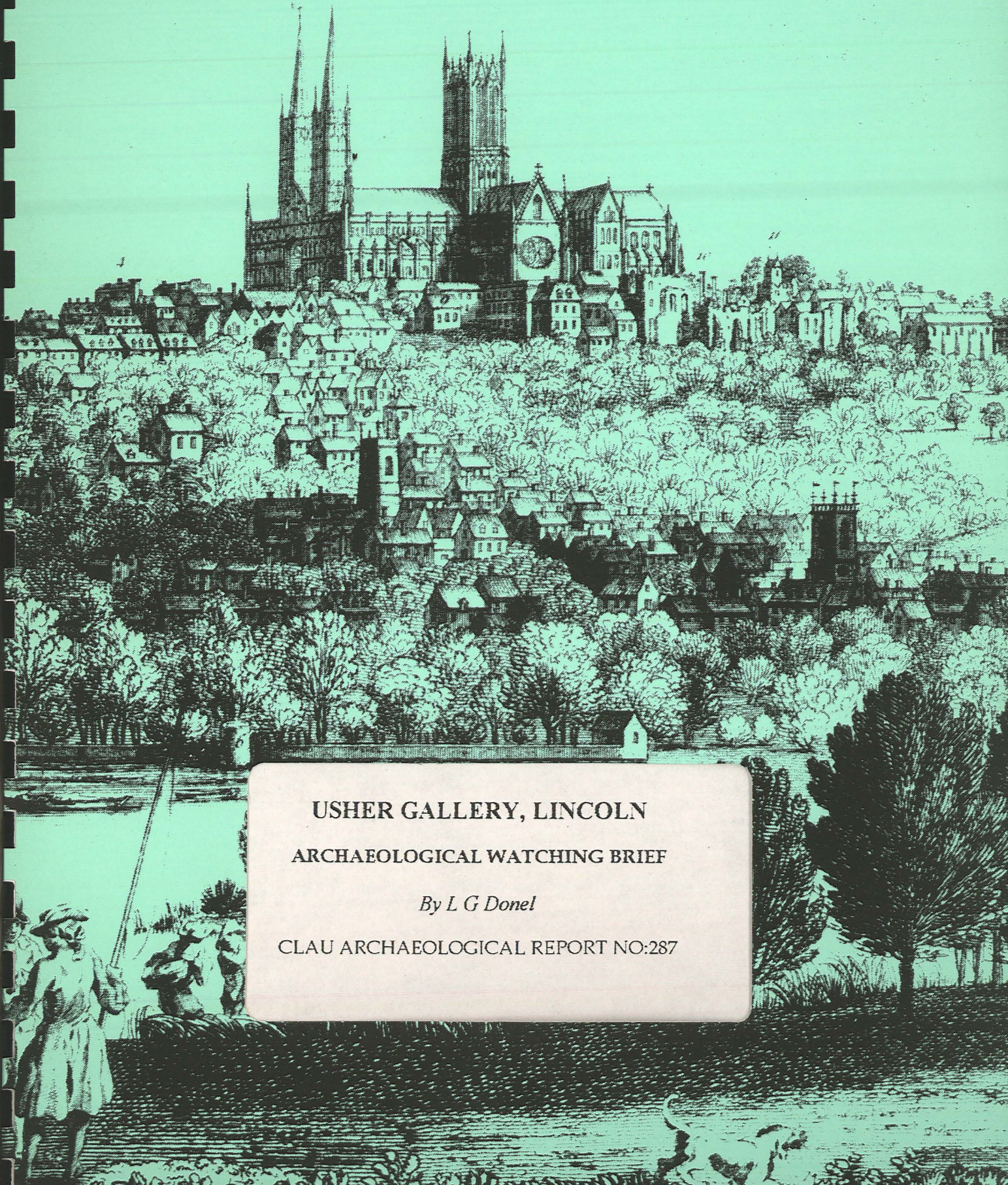


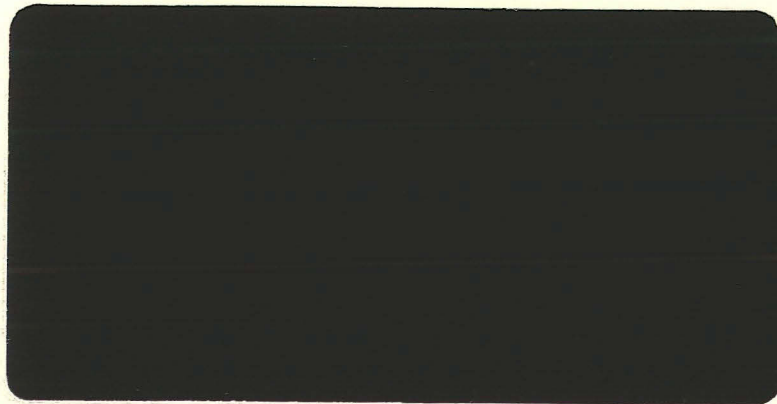
CITY OF  
◇ LINCOLN ARCHAEOLOGY ◇  
U N I T



USHER GALLERY, LINCOLN  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
*By L G Donel*  
CLAU ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT NO:287

Lincolnshire County Council  
Archives Department

TEL. 0522 539724 FAX 0522 539724  
9.1.97



**A**  
**Report to**  
***Lincolnshire County Council***

**December 1996**

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**Prepared by**

*The City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit*  
*Charlotte House*  
*The Lawn*  
*Union Road*  
*Lincoln*  
*LN1 3BL*

*Tel: Lincoln (01522) 545326*  
*Fax: Lincoln (01522) 548089*

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**USHER GALLERY, LINCOLN**  
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

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Pre-Roman (1<sup>st</sup> century B.C. and earlier)

No definite evidence for prehistoric settlement has yet been revealed during the investigations in proximity to the site.

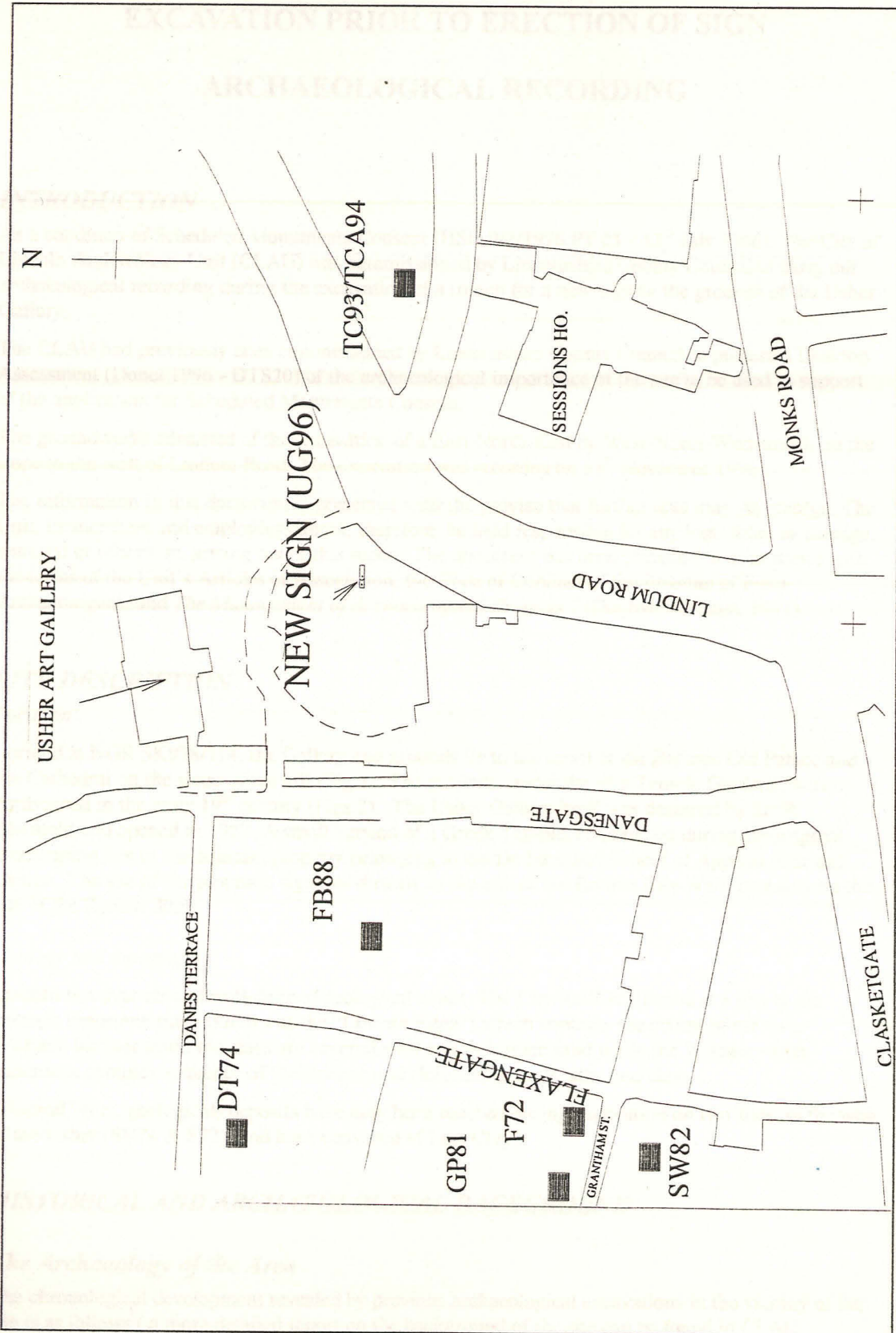


Fig. 1 - Location of new sign - showing also other excavations in the vicinity

# USHER GALLERY, LINCOLN

## EXCAVATION PRIOR TO ERECTION OF SIGN

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING

#### **INTRODUCTION**

As a condition of Scheduled Monuments Consent (HSD 9/2/1976 PT 21 - 12<sup>th</sup> July 1996), The City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit (CLAU) was commissioned by Lincolnshire County Council to carry out archaeological recording during the excavation of a trench for a new sign in the grounds of the Usher Gallery.

The CLAU had previously been commissioned by Lincolnshire County Council to prepare a Desktop Assessment (Donel 1996 - DTS20) of the archaeological importance of the site to be used in support of the application for Scheduled Monuments Consent.

The groundworks consisted of the excavation of a East-North-East by West-North-West trench on the slope to the west of Lindum Road. The excavation was recorded on 13<sup>th</sup> November 1996.

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).

#### **SITE DESCRIPTION**

##### *Location*

Located at NGR SK978/714, the Gallery and grounds lie to the south of the Bishops Old Palace and the Cathedral on the slope of the hill (Fig.1). The grounds, under the title Temple Gardens, were landscaped in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century (Figs.2). The Usher Gallery itself was designed by Sir R. Blomfeld and opened in 1927. A small version of a Greek Temple, constructed during the original landscaping lies in the adjacent property belonging to the De Montfort School of Applied Arts and Design. The site of the proposed sign lies directly to the east of the Roman City Wall, probably on the site of the Roman ditch.

##### *Geology and topography*

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.

"Natural" (i.e., geological) deposits have only been reached during excavation on two sites to the west of the Usher (SH74 & F72), and have consisted of Lias Clay.

#### **HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

##### *The Archaeology of the Area*

The chronological development revealed by previous archaeological excavations in the vicinity of the site is as follows ( a more detailed report on the background of the site can be found in CLAU Archaeological Report No.224):

*Romano-British Period (1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D.)*

The site was located in the lower Roman Colonia, approximately 100m to the south of the south wall of the early defended area and directly to the east of the east wall of the later Roman City. Excavations in the locality have revealed evidence of Roman occupation from the late 1<sup>st</sup> - early 2<sup>nd</sup> century through to the late 4<sup>th</sup> century, including terracing (in both north-south and east-west directions), the remains of both timber and stone buildings, and several phases of the Roman street system. Burials have been discovered to the east of the property on the opposite side of Lindum Road, outside the walled Roman city.

The Roman city wall and rampart, running through the site was probably built in the late 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> century. It had a ditch system to the east. These defenses also served the medieval city.

*Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Scandinavian Period (5<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> centuries)*

Little evidence of occupation dating from this period was revealed by the work on Steep Hill and Danes Terrace.

In contrast, however, the sites investigated to the south-west (i.e., along Flaxengate, Grantham Place and Swan Street) confirm intensive late Anglo-Scandinavian occupation (the area had been largely abandoned during the early-mid Saxon periods), from the late 9<sup>th</sup> century. There may have been dumping in this period on the Roman rampart bank and recutting of the Roman ditch.

To the east, in the area between Lindum Road and Cathedral Street, kiln material, dating from the mid 10<sup>th</sup> century was discovered.

*The Medieval Period (late 11<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> centuries)*

Although there is no direct evidence from the site itself, nearby excavations indicate that this part of the city was continuously occupied, and developed between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. Previous excavations have recorded various structures of both stone and timber construction, some with cellars or undercrofts, probably representing shops and houses fronting on to the surrounding streets of Danes Terrace, Flaxengate and Steep Hill.

The Medieval city reused the former Roman fortifications, perhaps with modifications and repairs. The ditch appears to have lain on the line of Broadgate and the lower section of Lindum Road.

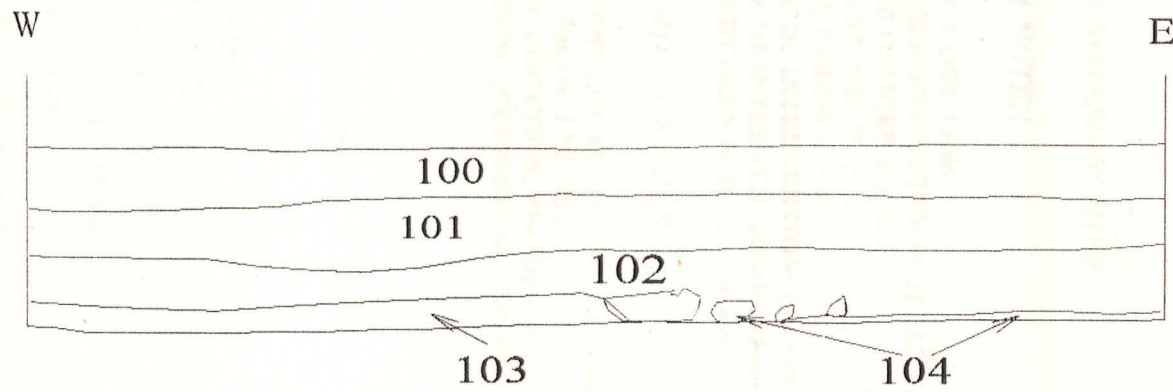
*Post-Medieval (16<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> centuries)*

In the areas to the west and south-west of the site under consideration, development and redevelopment continued much the same as in previous years. Parts of existing medieval houses continued in use until the 17<sup>th</sup> century in some cases, but in others new structures were built in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Further phases of demolition and rebuilding continued through to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and it is likely that the majority of the surviving buildings in the area around the site date from this period.

The city wall survived in parts of this area into the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The ditch was backfilled in c.1590. There is no evidence that the site has been other than an open area since that date.

**THE WATCHING BRIEF**

A trench measuring 5m long by 1m wide by 600mm deep was excavated approximately 8m to the west of Lindum Rd. (Fig.2). The earliest material recorded consisted of a layer of modern concrete (104) which extended over 60% of the bottom of the trench. The concrete was sealed by a layer of compact dark brown grey clay (103) which was overlain by a medium compact light brown clayey earth (102). (102) was subsequently sealed by a medium compact layer of dark brown/grey earth (101) which was overlain by topsoil (100). Layers 100 to 104 all showed evidence of modern pot, tile, brick and plastic.



**100 - TOPSOIL**

**101 - MEDIUM COMPACT DK/ BROWN/GREY SOIL**

**102 - MEDIUM COMPACT LIGHT BROWN CLAYEY EARTH**

**103 - COMPACT DARK BROWN CLAY WITH MODERN TILE AND BRICK**

**104 - CONCRETE AND CONCRETE RUBBLE**

Fig. 2 - Trench 1 - East/West section

## CONCLUSIONS

Although the investigations described above have demonstrated a high quality of survival of remains and deposits from virtually all periods of the city's history in the vicinity of the site, the limited depth of the trench meant that there was no evidence for any earlier occupation other than the deposition of the modern concrete. There is some indication from earlier maps that buildings may have existed along the frontage, but there is no clear evidence for any specific building which might be associated with the concrete. Development and landscaping on and near the site over the past two centuries may have also disturbed or removed some of the archaeological remains. As the site lies directly on the line of the Roman ditch it is likely that any earlier archaeological material may survive intact at a greater depth than that required by this specific excavation.

## LHA NOTES/ARCHIVE

### LHA NOTES

CLAU CODE: *UG96*

SMC REF: *HSD 9/2/1976 PT 21 - 12<sup>th</sup> July 1996*

FIELD OFFICER: *L Donel*

NGR: *SK 9781/7149*

CIVIL PARISH: *Lincoln*

DATE OF INTERVENTION: *12 - 13/11/96*

TYPE OF INTERVENTION: *Watching Brief*

UNDERTAKEN FOR: *Lincolnshire County 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.: *160.96*

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