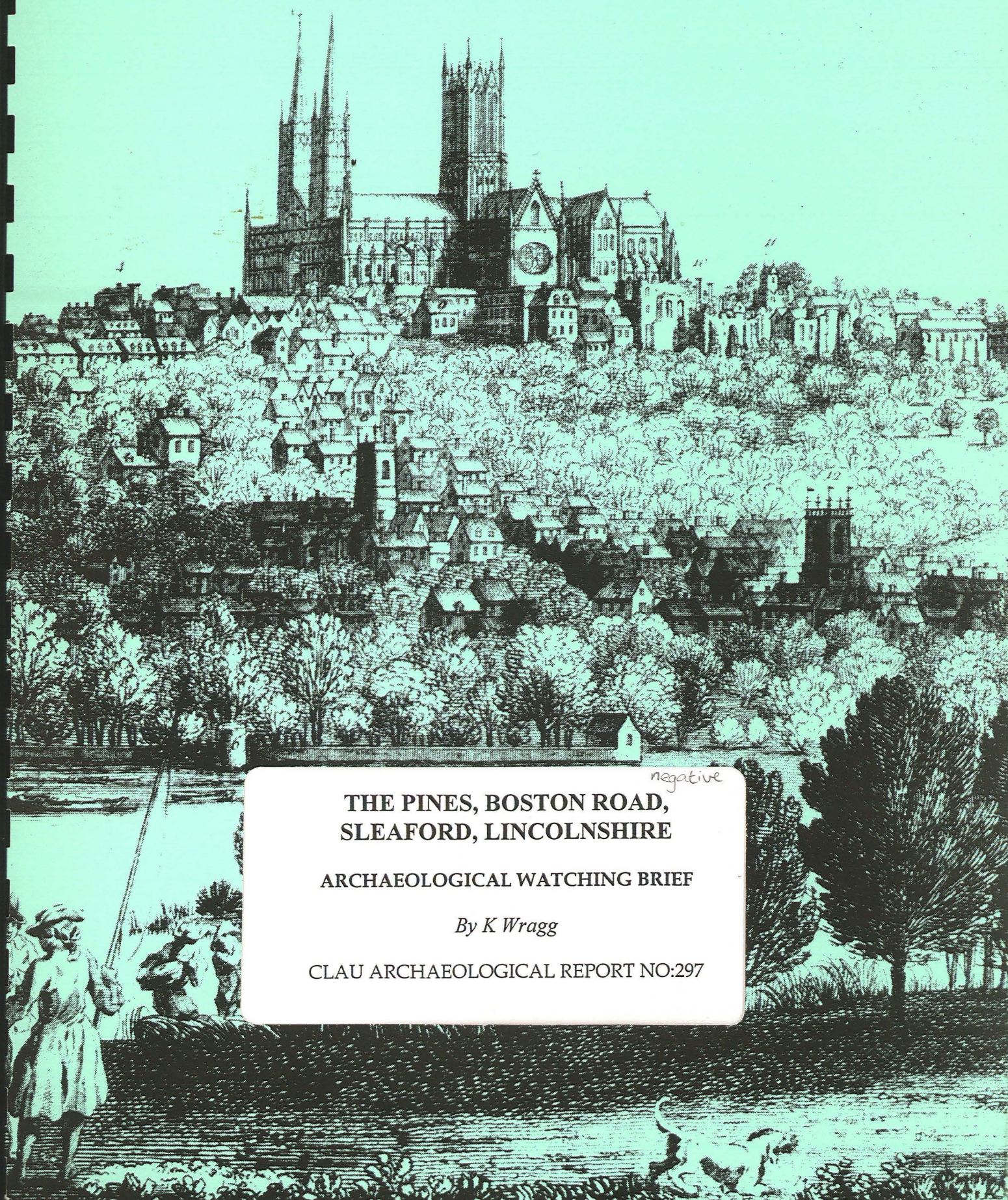
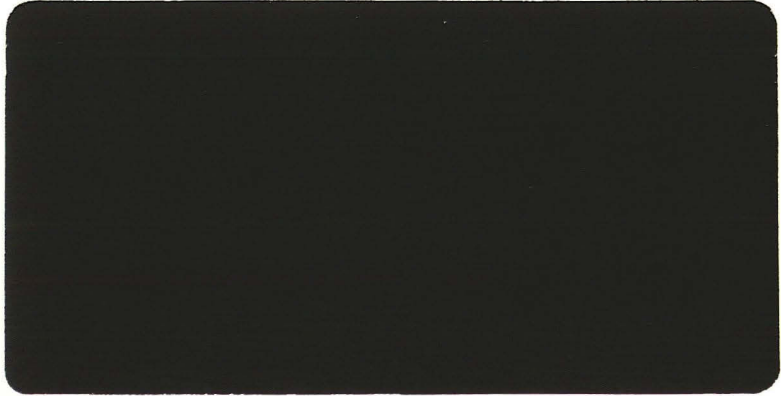


CITY OF
◆ LINCOLN ARCHAEOLOGY ◆
U N I T



negative
**THE PINES, BOSTON ROAD,
SLEAFORD, LINCOLNSHIRE**
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
By K Wragg
CLAU ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT NO:297

Lincolnshire County Council
Archives
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7.2.97



A
Report to
Clive Wickes Associates

January 1997

Prepared by

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Archaeological Watching Brief

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THE PINES, BOSTON ROAD, SLEAFORD, LINCOLNSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Proposals for this site, originally put forward in late 1993/early 1994, involved the construction of three detached dwellings, together with associated garages, to be accessed by a new private driveway c.4.5m wide.

In view of the general proximity of sites of known archaeological importance within a rich historic landscape, it was decided by North Kesteven District Council that all groundworks associated with the development should be monitored archaeologically. As a result, the City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit was commissioned by Clive Wickes Associates to carry out an intermittent watching brief on the site.

However, notwithstanding the potential of the site, as related below, the results from this watching brief have proved to be largely negative, with the only artefacts dating to the 19th and 20th centuries being recovered.

It was suggested by the groundworks contractor that the site had been cleared and "dug-over" in 1896, in advance of the construction of the new tennis courts, and given the nature of the finds recovered, together with the general sterility of the ground, this may be correct. It is also likely that this area was originally farmland. If this was indeed the case, the effects of repeated ploughing on the site would be such that any buried archaeological features would be obliterated, even to the extent that stone features contained within the plough depth would be at the least displaced, if not completely removed. Alternatively, it could simply be the case that this particular site has

not been the focus of any form of occupation in past years.

However, while it would appear that little or no trace of occupation can be identified on the site, it is important to stress that the groundworks investigated during this project covered a relatively small area. With this in mind, the possibility of encountering preserved buried archaeological remains should not be discounted at other locations on other sites in the immediate vicinity.

THE PINES, BOSTON ROAD, SLEAFORD, LINCOLNSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

1.0 INTRODUCTION

TF0715 4560

This development is located at grid reference TF 7150/5600 in an area formerly used as tennis courts lying immediately to the south of the Boston Road. The site measures approximately 80m (N-S) x 33m (E-W) (see Fig.1).

Proposals for the site, originally put forward in late 1993/early 1994, involved the construction of three detached dwellings, together with associated garages, to be accessed by a new private driveway c.4.5m wide.

In view of the general proximity of sites of known archaeological importance within a rich historic landscape (see 2.0 below), it was decided by North Kesteven District Council that all groundworks associated with the development should be monitored archaeologically, and planning permission was conditioned accordingly.

During March 1996, the City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit (C.L.A.U.) was commissioned by Clive Wickes Associates to carry out an intermittent watching brief on the site, in order to comply with the condition of planning consent. Observation was carried out on the site between the 12th March and 19th April 1996.

Unfortunately, owing to an oversight, groundworks and construction had commenced prior to this appointment, and work on two of the three building plots had been completed with two new houses erected at the southern end of the site (plots 2 & 3). The main groundworks associated with these two plots were therefore not investigated archaeologically, but limited recording was

subsequently possible during excavation for various services related to the two structures.

In mitigation however, following the appointment of an archaeological contractor, the client, Clive Wickes Associates, has been consistently helpful and supportive with regard to the archaeological recording of the remaining works on the site. Observation has been carried out during all phases of both service trenching and access road construction, resulting in a reasonable proportion of the site being monitored.

Following the completion of plots 2 & 3, together with the service and access arrangements, it was decided to delay the construction on plot 1, at least until the early part of 1997.

In view of the generally negative results produced by the watching brief thus far, and the potentially protracted timetable for completion of the remaining elements of the site, it was decided by the North Kesteven District Council Heritage Officer that sufficient archaeological work had been carried out across the site to allow the watching brief condition to be discharged. Accordingly the project was brought to a close in January 1997.

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

Archaeological investigations undertaken during the past 30 years, both in Sleaford and the immediate vicinity, have revealed significant archaeological deposits dating from the Prehistoric to the medieval periods.

Artefacts of Middle Bronze-Age date (c.2400-1650 BC) provide the earliest evidence for human activity in the area, but are not necessarily indicative of settlement.

During the Early Iron-Age (c.700-650 BC) however, a settlement was located close to a ford where a prehistoric trackway crossed the River Slea (May, 1976, 176). Parts of this settlement were revealed during excavations at Old Place in 1960-66, with further elements uncovered by work in 1984, undertaken in advance of redevelopment. These excavations proved the importance of the site, revealing the largest assemblage of coin blank moulds from any Iron-Age site in Europe and possibly identifying the location of a major mint of the local tribe, the *Corieltauvi*. Although no evidence to suggest pre-Roman buildings or defensive structures was found during the Old Place excavations, the large assemblage of coin moulds as well as pottery lends credibility to the theory that a tribal centre or *oppidum* was located on the site.

Roman occupation of the eastern fringes of Sleaford has long been recognised and large quantities of Roman artefacts have been recorded over the last 30 years. The earlier prehistoric trackway (now known as Mareham Lane) was renewed and re-used during the Roman period. Archaeological investigations in 1955, again at Old Place, showed that the road featured a well metalled surface with a substantial stone/gravel foundation, and was bounded by at least one roadside ditch.

In more recent years, further archaeological work, mainly centred on the Hoplands area to the east of Old Place, has revealed additional evidence of Roman occupation. This has included cut features (both pits and ditches), burials, metalled surfaces (seeming to represent side roads connecting with Mareham

Lane, together with possible yard areas), and the remains of stone, and possibly timber structures.

Evidence for the end of Roman occupation in Sleaford is unclear, and although finds of Saxon date were found during the Old Place excavations, no definite evidence was found to suggest a continuation of occupation on the site from the late-Roman to Saxon periods.

The main focus of early Anglo-Saxon occupation in Sleaford remains uncertain. Its existence is likely given the location of a large Pagan Saxon cemetery c.200m to the west of the present site (241 inhumations were recorded in 1882 from an estimated 600, including half a dozen cremations). Further evidence of Saxon occupation was recorded in 1978 during excavations in the Market Place, to the north of the development site. Here, excavations revealed pit features and what appeared to represent timber structures.

Late Saxon occupation in Sleaford is still relatively unknown. A few inconclusive structural traces were recorded in the Market Place, but from documentary sources it is clear that the estate of Sleaford was of great importance in the late Anglo-Saxon period as an economic and jurisdictional centre for its dependent group of settlements.

In the immediate pre-Conquest period it appears likely that both a market and court were established in Sleaford. The importance of the town during the medieval period is shown by the continued presence of the market, and the construction of the Castle by Bishop Alexander of Lincoln in the 12th century to form the centre of the episcopal estate (all refs. unless stated, Mahany & Roffe, 1979).

3.0 RESULTS

The groundworks that formed the basis of this archaeological recording programme comprised: 1) limited service trenching around the two newly constructed houses (plots 2 & 3); 2) a linear trench for gas supply pipes which extended across the majority of the N-S length of the site; and 3) reduction of site level along the eastern side of the site to allow formation of the new access road. Further groundworks were also planned for plot 1, but as mentioned above, in view of the negative results thus far it was decided to terminate the watching brief before commencement of this phase of the works.

Although depths of excavation varied across the site, the buried deposits were seen to be consistent, with no obvious evidence for archaeological finds or features.

The earliest deposit recorded was a layer of moderate compaction, friable, mid yellow-brown sand and gravel [102] containing no obvious inclusions. This layer was c.200mm thick to the limit of excavation (L.O.E.), and was present across the site, although the proportion of sand to gravel varied from c.50:50, at the north of the site, to c.80:20 to the south.

Layer [102] was overlain by a 500mm-800mm thick layer of moderately compacted, friable, mid brown sandy silt [101] containing only occasional root inclusions and very infrequent small flecks of stone. The only finds recovered during the project were retrieved from this layer, but all were of late 19th century or early 20th century date.

This latter layer was originally the topsoil deposit for the site and supported a covering of rough grass in the areas of the development where site-stripping was not carried out. In the parts of the site required for access during construction works, the upper 200-300mm of layer [101] had been removed, and replaced by a similar thickness of loose-moderately compacted limestone hardcore, [100].

4.0 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Notwithstanding the potential of the site, as related above, the results from this watching brief have proved to be largely negative, with the only artefacts dating to the 19th and 20th centuries being recovered.

It was suggested by the groundworks contractor that the site had been cleared and "dug-over" in 1896, in advance of the construction of the new tennis courts, and given the nature of the finds recovered, together with the general sterility of the ground, this may be correct. It is also likely that this area was originally farmland. If this was indeed the case, the effects of repeated ploughing on the site would be such that any buried archaeological features would be obliterated, even to the extent that stone features contained within the plough depth would be at the least displaced, if not completely removed. Alternatively, it could simply be the case that this particular site has not been the focus of any form of occupation in past years.

However, while it would appear that little or no trace of occupation can be identified on the site, it is important to stress that the groundworks investigated during this project covered a relatively small area. With this in mind, the possibility of encountering preserved buried archaeological remains should not be discounted at other locations on other sites in the immediate vicinity.

5.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit would like to thank the following for their assistance during this project: Mr Clive Wickes, of Clive Wickes Associates, Old School House, 36 Boston Road, Sleaford, Lincs, NG34 7EZ; Ms Kate Orr, North Kesteven District Council Heritage Officer, P.O.Box 3, District Council Offices, Kesteven Street, Sleaford, Lincolnshire, NG34 7EF; and Mr D.Whattam, Building Contractor.

ACCESSION DATE: -

6.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Mahany, C & Roffe, D (eds.) 1979 *Sleaford*, South Lincolnshire Archaeology 3, South Lincolnshire Archaeological Unit, Stamford

Thomas, G W 1887 On Excavations in an Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Sleaford, in Lincolnshire *Archaeologia* L, 383-406

Whitwell, J B 1992 *Roman Lincolnshire - Revised Edition*, History of Lincolnshire 2, Lincolnshire Local Hist Soc, Lincoln

7.0 LHA NOTE/ARCHIVE DETAILS

7.1 LHA NOTE DETAILS

CLAU CODE: PIN96

PLANNING APPLICATION NO.:
N/57/1000/93

FIELD OFFICER: K. Wragg

NGR: TF 7150/5600

TF 67194560

CIVIL PARISH: Sleaford

SMR No.: n/a

DATE OF INTERVENTION: 12/03/96 -
07/01/97

TYPE OF INTERVENTION: Watching Brief

UNDERTAKEN FOR: Clive Wickes
Associates, Old School House, 36 Boston
Road, Sleaford, Lincs, NG34 7EZ.

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.: 32.96

**APPENDIX A - ARCHIVE
DEPOSITION**

The archive consists of:

No.	Description
1	Site diary
1	Report
3	Scale drawings
1 set	Photographic records - Colour slides

The primary archive material, as detailed above, is currently held by :

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

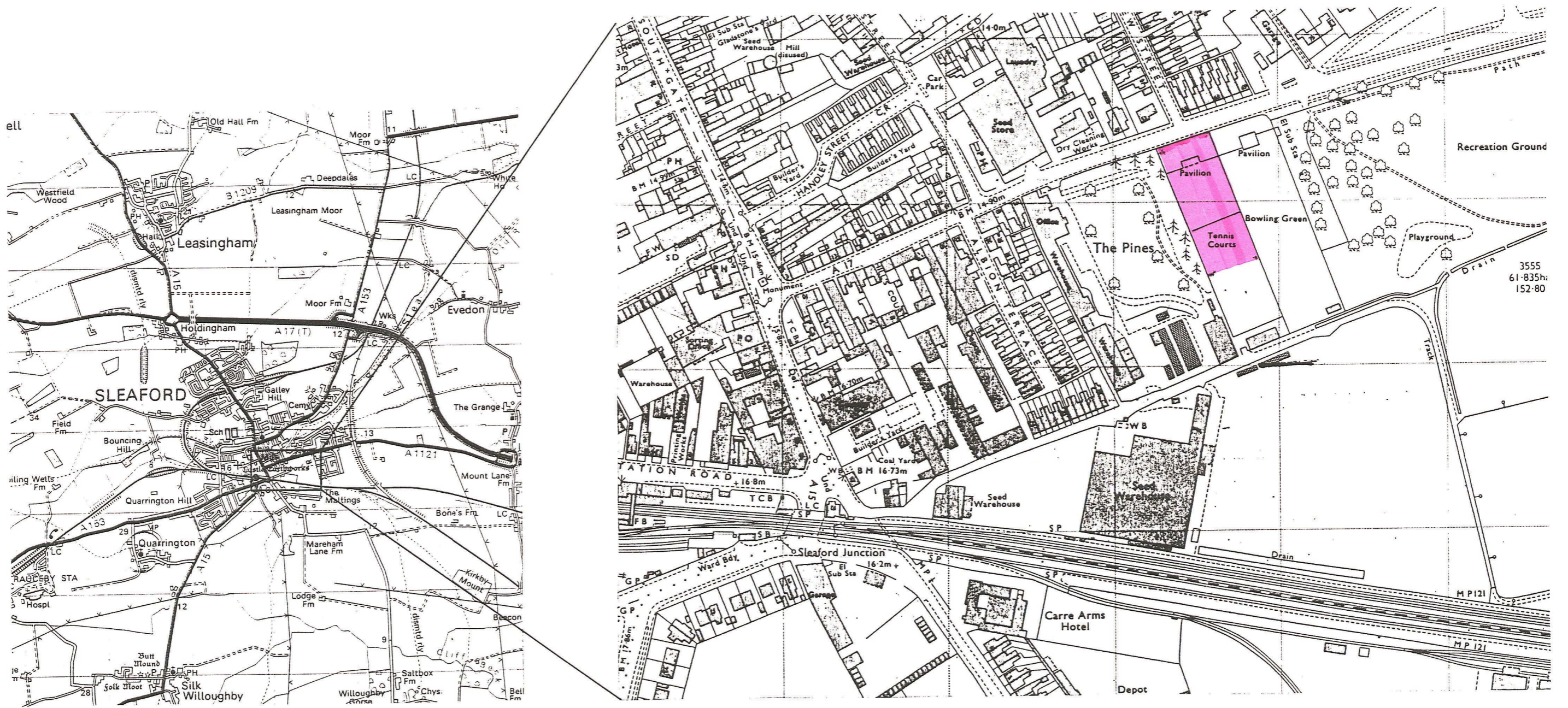
It is intended that transfer to the City and County Museum, Friars Lane, Lincoln, in accordance with current published requirements, under Museum Accession Number 32.96, will be undertaken following completion of this project.

CITY OF LINCOLN ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT		
SITE CODE: PIN96	PLAN/ELEV/SECTION NO:	
CLIENT: Clive Wickes Associates		
DESCRIPTION: Site Location Plan		
SCALE: See Below	ARCHIVE NO:	
DRAWN BY:	CHECKED:	DATE:
MUSEUM ACCESSION NO: 32.96		



KEY

Location of Site

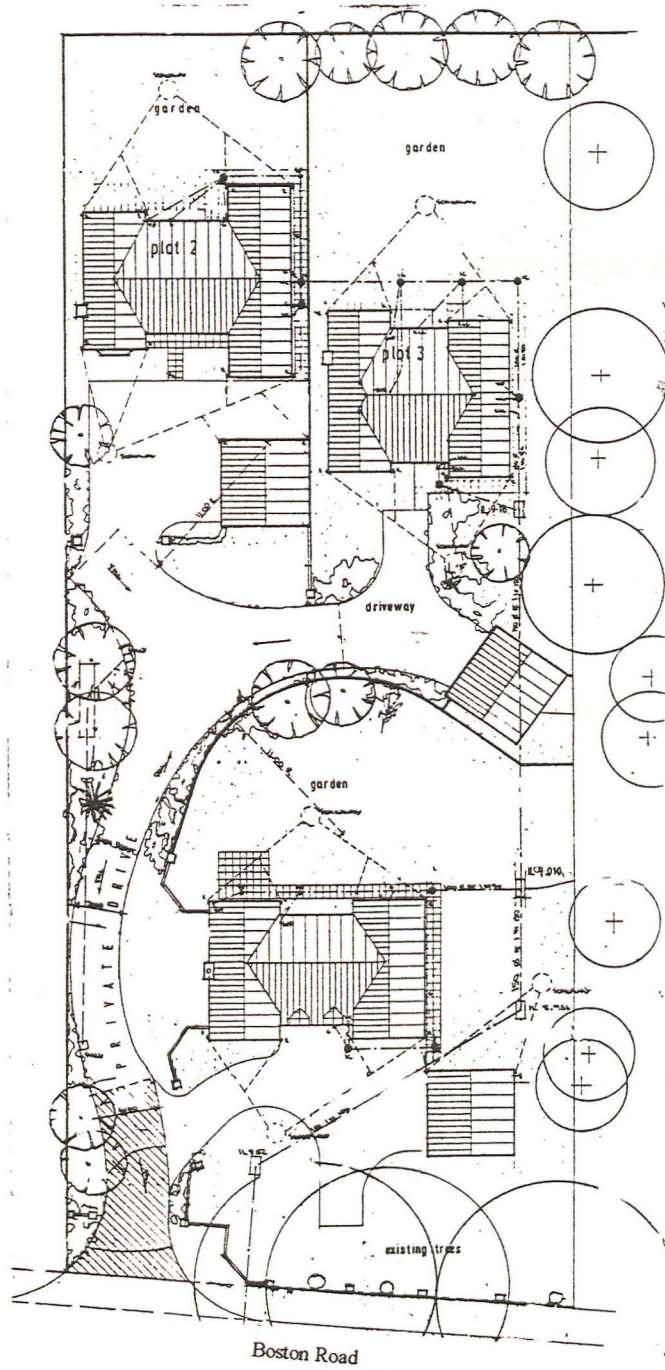


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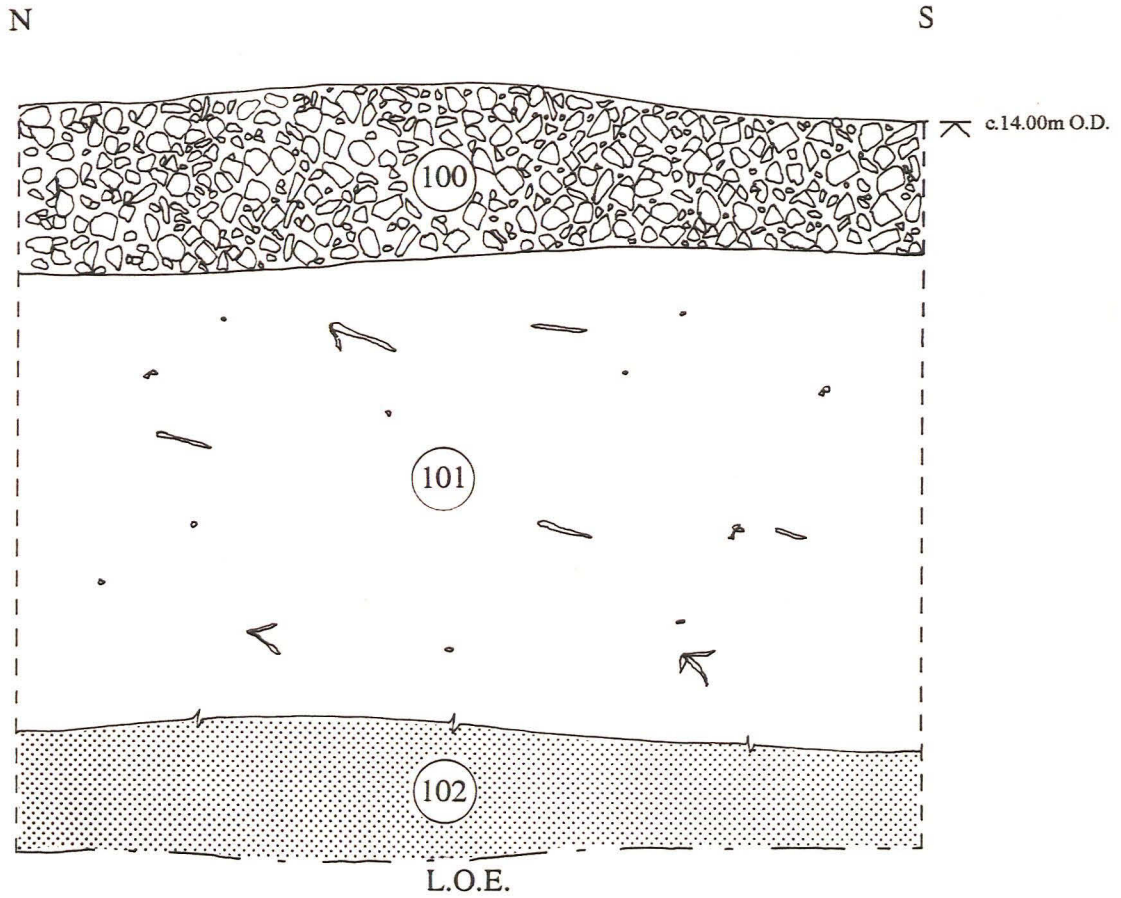
Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown copyright.

Fig.1

CITY OF LINCOLN ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT		
SITE CODE: PIN96	PLANE/LEV/SECTION NO:	
CLIENT: Clive Wickes Associates		
DESCRIPTION: Site Layout Plan		
SCALE: 1:500	ARCHIVE NO:	
DRAWN BY:	CHECKED:	DATE:
MUSEUM ACCESSION NO: 32.96		



CITY OF LINCOLN ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT		
SITE CODE: PIN96	PLANELEV/SECTION NO: 1	
CLIENT: Clive Wickes Associates		
DESCRIPTION: West-Facing Section		
SCALE: 1:10	ARCHIVE NO:	
DRAWN BY: KW	CHECKED:	DATE: 12/03/96
MUSEUM ACCESSION NO: 32.96		



KEY



-  Limestone Hardcore
-  Sand & Gravel (Natural)

Fig.3