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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF REPORT**

Livingstone Cottage, Washingborough, Lincoln

Site Code: LCW 97
LCNCC Acc No. 239.97
NGR: -502004 370758
502039 370810



Lincolnshire County Council
Archaeology Section

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Report prepared for Mr J Gillyett by Simon Johnson
September 1997

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Summary

- * *A standard archaeological watching brief was carried out during groundworks for a detached garage and extension to Livingstone Cottage, Washingborough, Lincoln.*
- * *The development had no great impact upon deposits of archaeological significance; though a small assemblage of recent pottery sherds was noted, and the alignment of a field boundary was plotted.*

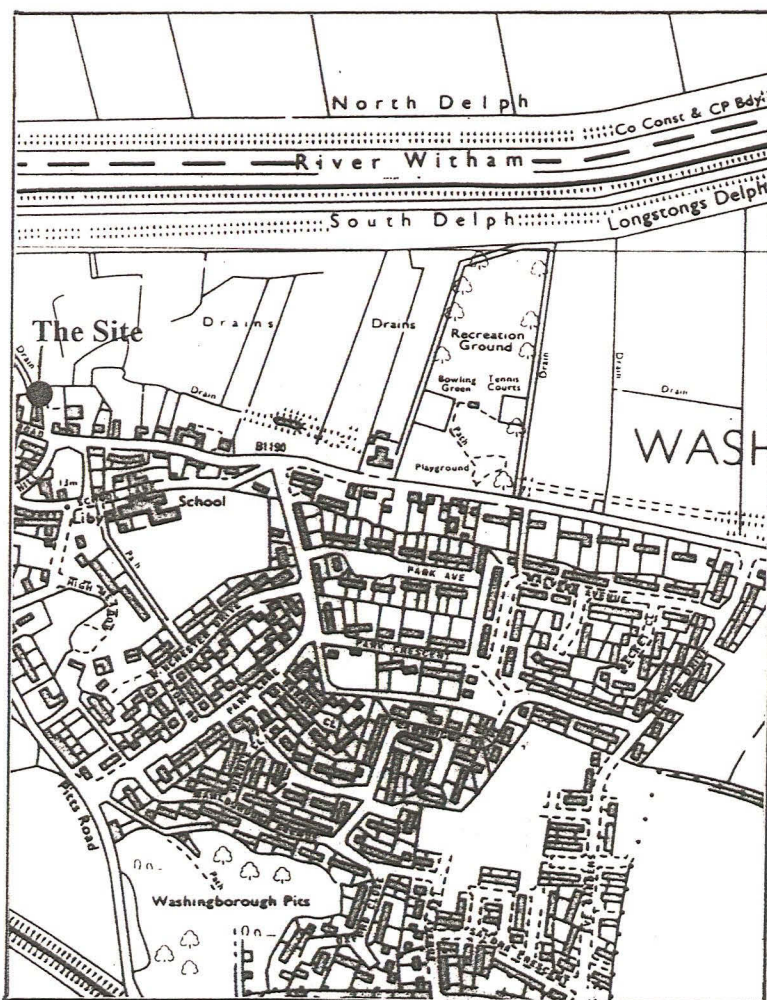


Fig. 1 General site location at scale 1:10,000

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1.0 Introduction

An archaeological watching brief was carried out on behalf of Mr J Gillyett during groundworks for a detached garage and extension to Livingstone Cottage, Washingborough, Lincoln (Fig. 1). The brief was commissioned to fulfil a planning requirement issued by North Kesteven District Council.

The site central national grid reference is 502004 370758.

2.0 Location and description

Washingborough is in the administrative district of North Kesteven approximately 4km east of Lincoln. The village lies within the Witham Fen with the site located at the northern fringe of the settlement, accessed by Royal Oak Lane which runs north off the B1190.

The base geology comprises undivided Lincolnshire Limestone overlain by brown calcareous soil (BGS sheet 114; Straw 1969).

3.0 Planning background

In February 1997, an application was submitted to North Kesteven District Council for change of use of land to residential development; and the erection of a detached garage and extension to Livingstone cottage (Application no. N/71/0202/97). Permission was granted in July 1997 subject to five conditions: condition five requiring the undertaking of an archaeological scheme of works.

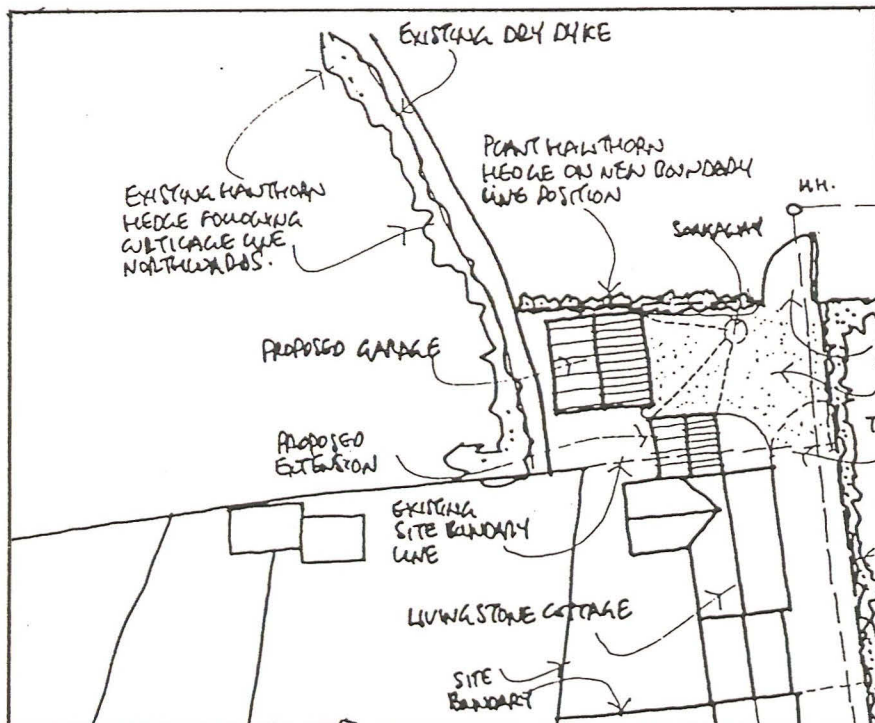


Fig. 2: Proposed development plan, at scale 1:500, supplied by the client

4.0 Purpose and methods

In 1990, the Department of the Environment issued Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG 16). For the first time, this document made the effects of development on the archaeological resource a 'material consideration' within the planning process. PPG 16 emphasises the importance of preservation *in situ* but, where this is not possible, requires archaeological deposits to be preserved *by record*.

The principal elements of PPG16 have been incorporated within the Deposit Plan for North Kesteven District Council (September 1992): Policy C6 states the following:-

"DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WHICH ARE LIKELY TO ADVERSELY AFFECT A SITE OF POTENTIAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST WILL NORMALLY BE SUBJECT TO A CONDITION OF PLANNING PERMISSION ALLOWING A WATCHING BRIEF TO BE MAINTAINED DURING DEVELOPMENT"

The Heritage Officer for North Kesteven issued a project brief detailing the level of archaeological intervention to be maintained during the development. The requirement was for a programme of detailed observation and recording commonly known as a 'watching brief'. This has been defined as:

'An archaeological watching brief is defined as a programme of observation and investigation conducted during the destruction of archaeological deposits, resulting in the preparation of a report and ordered archive' (IFA, 1994, 1)

Archaeological monitoring comprised the following elements:

- (i) Observation of topsoil stripping and inspection of subsoil for archaeological features.
- (ii) Collection of stratified and unstratified artefacts.
- (iii) Observation during foundation and service trenching followed by inspection of sections and natural for archaeological features.
- (iv) Recording of archaeological features and limited excavation to determine, where possible, the date and nature of deposits.

Recording was undertaken using standard Watching Brief General Account, Context and Record Sheets, supplemented with scale drawings (1:20) and photography. The development impact was plotted at 1:50 with locations of representative sections.

Following the completion of the fieldwork, artefactual remains were washed and processed. A detailed site archive is in preparation, and this will be submitted to the City and County Museum, Lincoln.

This report will form a subsequent entry to the County SMR and the parish file held by the Heritage Officer for North Kesteven.

The watching brief was conducted over a period of two days by Mr M Ridsdale (day 1) and the writer (day 2).

5.0 Archaeological and historical background

Areas adjacent to the River Witham, including Washingborough, have attracted settlement since prehistoric times. The development of this settlement in and around Washingborough is poorly understood owing to a lack of systematic fieldwork. Many chance finds, however, show that the area has been settled since at least the Mesolithic period, when small networks maintained hunter-gather subsistence economies.

Finds of dugout boats from Washingborough and nearby Fiskerton indicate that the river and flood plane was used for transport from at least the Bronze Age.

The Witham appears not only to have been important for communication and exploitation, but also in the expression of religious fervour. The river has yielded a large assemblage of important finds of later prehistoric metalwork. This ranges from simple tools such as knives and axes to large, high status, pieces such as the 'Witham Shield' (found at Washingborough) which exemplify the skill, both in design and execution, of Iron Age craftsman .

Many finds have been dated to the Romano-British period including pottery, coins, and cinerary vessels. It is not entirely clear what level of activity these finds reflect during the Roman period. The Car Dyke, a discontinuous earthwork some 56 miles long, survives as a series of scheduled areas north of the present village (the south bank is runs *circa* 20m north of the application area). It extends along the Fen Edge from the Witham to the Nene valley at Peterborough. There is no universally accepted interpretation of this monument, though it has been explained as an artificial canal of Romano-British origin similar to the Fosdyke which links the Witham to the Trent (Whitwell, 1993, 57), as a boundary marker, and as a drainage course (Simmons 1979).

The present village can be traced back to the Domesday Survey of 1086 where it appears as *Washingeburg* which translates from the Old English as 'stronghold of the dwellers at the place subject to floods or used for washing' (Mills, 1993, 347)

6.0 Results

The brief took place over two days, during which time the foundations for the extension and garage were monitored and recorded. Excavation was by 180° Plant except for an area adjacent to Livingstone cottage itself, which was hand excavated due to the presence of an active drain.

6.1 Extension to Livingstone Cottage

Unstable voids within the underlying natural required a floating raft foundation rather than traditional strip trenches. The maximum dimensions were 1.90 x 1.60 m, with an excavated depth of 0.72 m below the reduced ground level. (Fig.4)

No archaeological features were recorded. The weathering profile may be summarised as follows:

- (100) Undifferentiated dark humic clayey silt with well sorted limestone/chalk gravel inclusions. Depth 0.28m. Topsoil
- (101) Mid brown clayey silt with frequent, well sorted, small limestone/chalk inclusions up to 0.08x0.06m. Depth 0.35-0.48m. Natural subsoil

These deposits compare with those recorded by the Heritage Officer for North Kesteven and the Boston Community Archaeologist during a small scale auger survey. The survey also resulted in recording an undurated layer sealed by (101) which comprised mixed limestone and gravel. This was spuriously interpreted as the bank of the Car Dyke. The developmental impact was more shallow than the *circa* 700mm at which this deposit showed, and thus the exact nature of it remains undetermined.

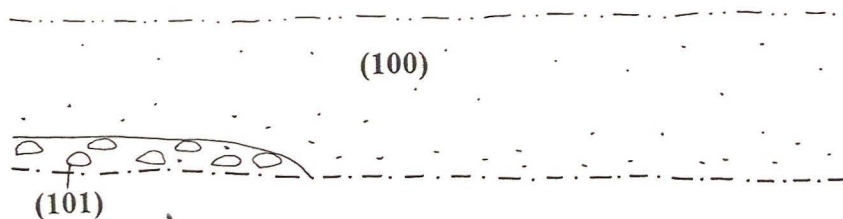


Fig.3: Representative section of weathering profile recorded in house extension (1:20) -see Fig. 3 for location

6.2 Garage

The Garage was also constructed using a raft foundation. Its maximum dimensions were 2.40 x 2.60m, and it was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.36m. Again, the weathering profile was characterised by an undifferentiated topsoil overlying a limestone rich subsoil.

The western limit of the foundation cut through a backfilled field boundary ditch [103] which contained a series of recent fill deposits (102). These comprised of redeposited

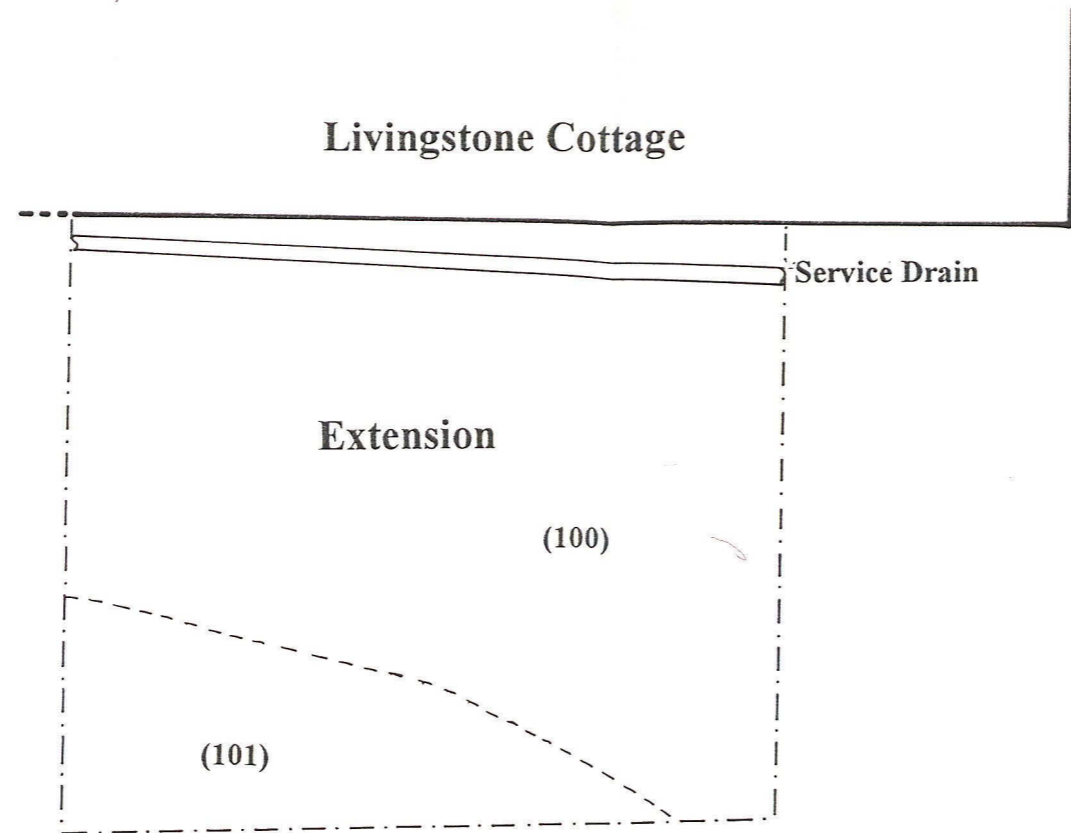
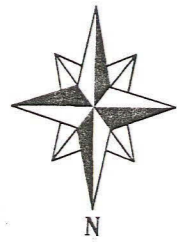


Fig. 4: Plan of development impact. Scale 1:50.

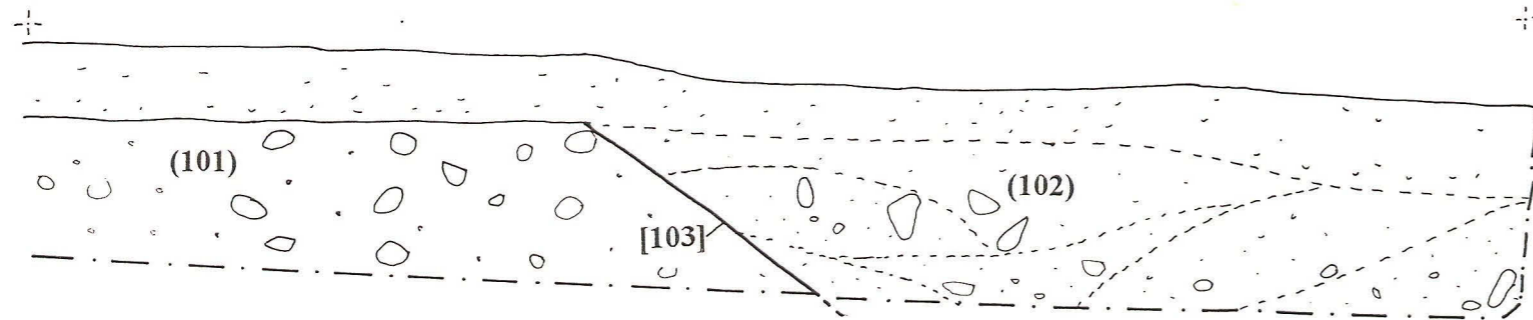
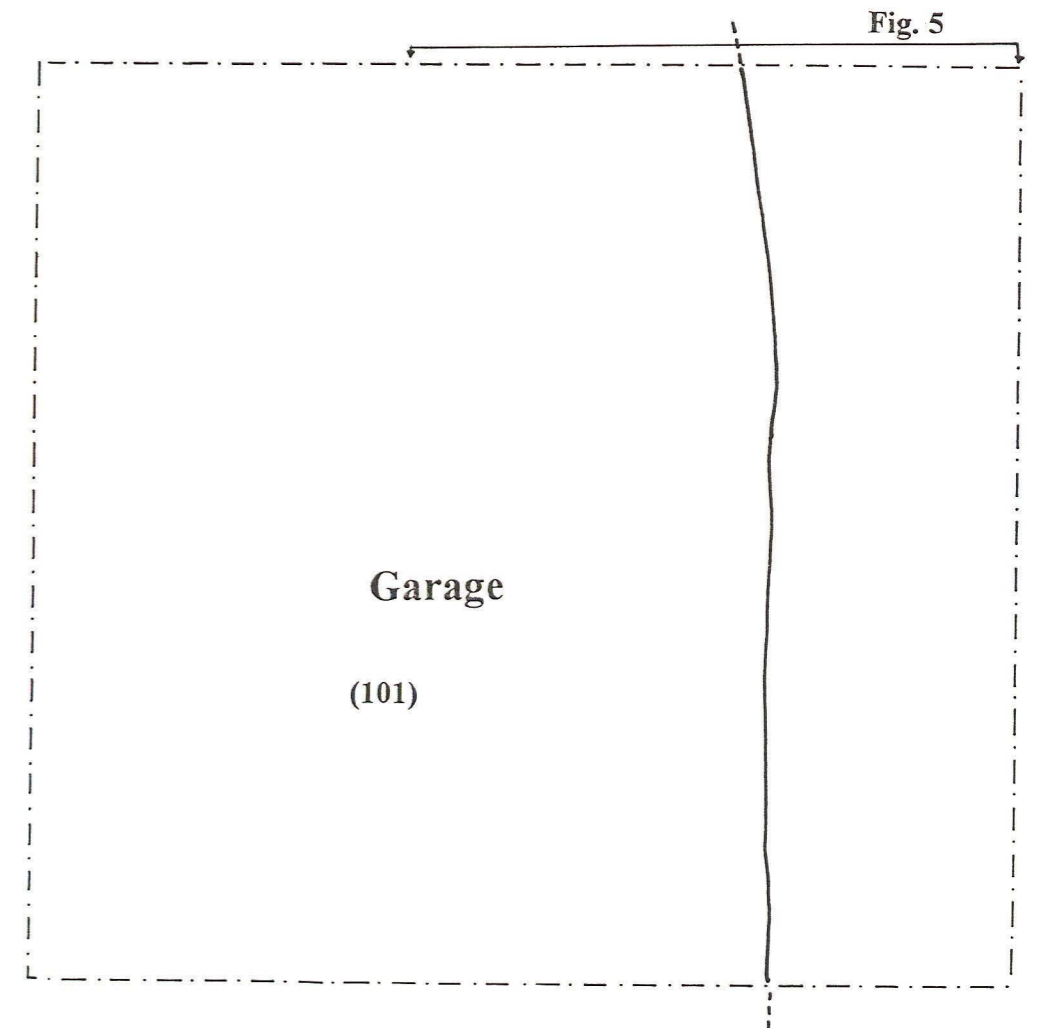


Fig. 5: South section, Garage footing, showing boundary ditch [103] with modern back fill (102). Scale 1:20

topsoil with modern inclusions of brick rubble and domestic waste. (Fig.4 and 5). The alignment of this boundary was recorded but primary deposits were not sampled as the developmental impact facilitated their survival *in situ*.

7.0 Summary and conclusions

The watching brief did not result in the exposure of significant archaeological deposits or artefacts. The linear ditch [103] was a property and/or field boundary which can be traced on current OS maps. This feature may have some antiquity, but as primary deposits were not threatened by the development its origins remain undated.

8.0 Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks are expressed to the client, Mr J Gillyett, for commissioning PCA to undertake the brief. Thanks are also due to Miles Ridsdale who monitored the first day of groundworks.

9.0 Appendices

9.1 Site archive

The basic site archive comprises the following elements:

- x 1 project specification
- x 1 project brief
- x 3 record sheets
- x 1 colour print films
- x 1 composite sheet of site drawings
- x 1 copy of this report

An ordered archive of the paper element is in preparation and will be deposited at the City and County Museum, Lincoln, within six months of the date of this report. It may be accessed by quoting Global Accession No: LCNCC 239.97.

9.2 References

- | | | |
|--------------------------|------|--|
| Dept. of the Environment | 1990 | 'Archaeology and Planning' <i>Planning Policy Guidance Note 16</i> |
| IFA | 1994 | <i>Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs</i> |
| Morris J (gen. ed.) | 1986 | <i>Domesday Book: Lincolnshire</i> |
| Mills AD | 1993 | <i>English Place Names</i> |
| Simmons BB | 1979 | 'The Lincolnshire Car Dyke. Navigation or Drainage?' <i>Britannia</i> Vol. X, 183-96 |
| Straw A | 1969 | <i>Lincolnshire Soils</i> |
| Whitwell JB | 1993 | <i>Roman Lincolnshire</i> |

9.3 Colour plates



Plate 1: General shot during excavation of garage raft foundation looking north-west

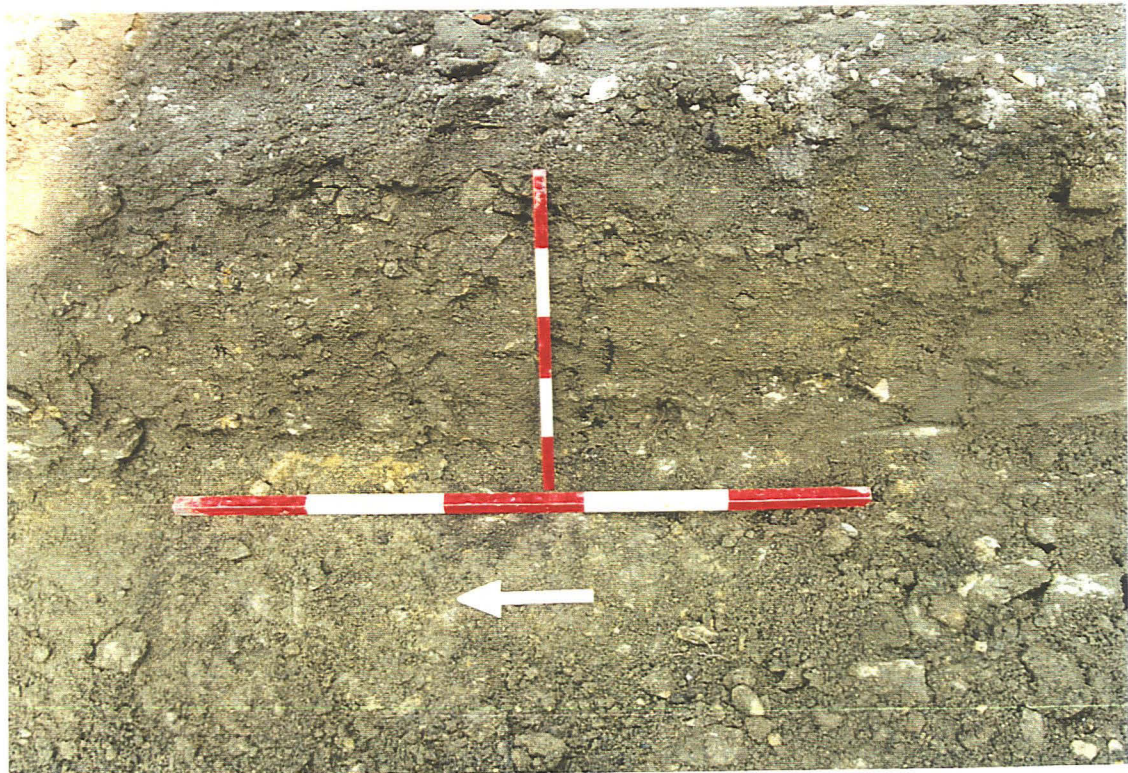


Plate 2: Representative section, extension foundation, looking east