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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
OF LAND ADJACENT TO
STATION ROAD,
SWINESHEAD,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(SSR97)**



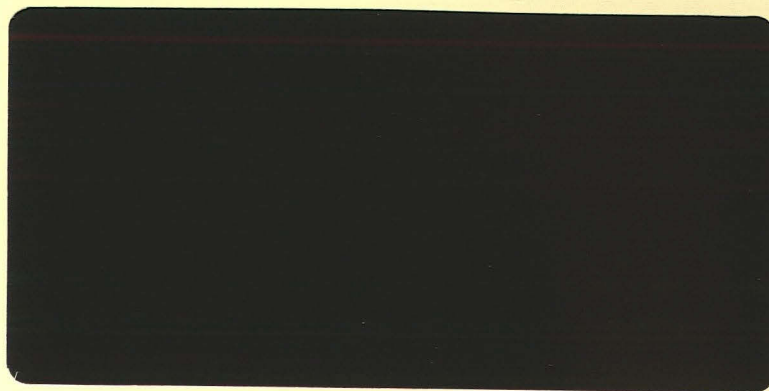
A P S
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
OF LAND ADJACENT TO
STATION ROAD,
SWINESHEAD,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(SSR97)**

Work Undertaken For
Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board

Report Compiled By
Fiona Walker

1997

A.P.S. Report No. 73/97

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1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief undertaken by Archaeological Project Services monitored groundworks and the excavation of stanchion pits for a new depot on land adjacent to Station Road, Swineshead.

Excavation of the stanchion pits revealed evidence of two ditches, while stripping for the road and hard standing uncovered two land drains, two gullies, two postholes and a pit.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

Between the 18th March and 29th October 1997, an archaeological watching brief monitored development work during the construction of a Black Sluice Drainage Board depot adjacent to Station Road, Swineshead (Fig. 3). Approval for the development was sought through submission of planning application B19/0647/95. Permission was granted subject to a standard condition for archaeological recording. The archaeological work, commissioned by Mr S. Hemming of the Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board, was undertaken by Archaeological Project Services in accordance with a brief set by the Community Archaeologist for Boston Borough Council (Appendix 1).

2.2 Topography and Geology

Swineshead is situated 7km from the northwest coast of The Wash, in the Fenland of south Lincolnshire (Fig. 1). Approximately 40km southeast of Lincoln and 10km southwest of Boston, the town lies in the civil parish of Swineshead, Boston District. The investigation site is located at grid reference TF22804140, c. 1.2km northwest

of the village centre as defined by the parish church of St. Mary (Fig. 2).

The site lies between 3m and 6m O.D. on Romney 532 'coarse silty gleyic brown calcareous alluvial soils' (Robson 1990).

2.3 Archaeological Setting

A stone axe (B19/030) recovered 400m northeast of the development site is likely to be of prehistoric date (Fig. 2). A second stone axe found 700m northeast of the site (B19/023) dates to the Bronze Age. However, the Bronze Age land surface is known to be deeply buried under later peats and alluvial silts. If the recorded find spots are correct, then the axes must have been recovered from a lower level, probably during drainage works. Alternatively these artefacts were brought into the area, possibly as part of a collection, and subsequently lost.

Romano-British pottery has been recovered within 0.75km north and northeast of the development (B19/023 and B19/032), and fieldwalking has produced a significant quantity of material from this period within a 5km radius of the site (Fig. 2). Aerial reconnaissance has located a series of enclosures, probably farms or settlements, that are typical of the late prehistoric-Romano-British period (B19/001; 002; 004; 012).

Late Saxon pottery, recovered during a watching brief conducted by the Boston Borough archaeologist 350m east of the development (B19/053) provides archaeological evidence for occupation during the periods of Anglo-Scandinavian migration and conquest (c. A.D. 400-1066) (Fig. 2). A single Late Saxon strap-end (B19/018), found near the centre of the village, 1.4km southeast of the development, is the only other recorded artifact from this period. The earliest historical reference to Swineshead dates to approximately A.D. 650 and suggests the

presence of a monastery. A passage from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle mentions *Swineshaefed* in 675 A.D. (Ekwall 1974, 457), suggesting that occupation during the 7th century may be expected.

Medieval finds are common in the village, and the surrounding landscape contains several standing monuments from this period. A scatter of pottery of medieval date was recovered from land 150m east of the investigation site during a watching brief on a pipe-laying operation (B19/050). Stenning or Estovening (B19/014), a village mentioned in the Domesday survey of A.D. 1086 but deserted by the 14th century, lay approximately 1.3km southeast of the development area. A church of the 14th century, St. Mary the Virgin (B19/006), lies in the centre of the village, 1.5km southeast of the site, and Manwar Ings Castle (B19/025), a relic of the feudal economy, is situated 1.5km roughly to the east. A Cistercian abbey of the 12th century is located c. 2km to the southeast of the development (Fig. 2).

Swineshead was a market town during the medieval period with charters for two annual fairs (Platts 1985, appendix 1). In the centre of the village, c 1.5km to the southeast of North End is the Butter Cross (B19/005). This stone market cross provided a focus for trading activities during the medieval period and later (Fig. 2).

3. AIMS

The objective of the watching brief was to record and interpret any archaeological remains exposed by the groundworks.

4. METHODS

Topsoil was stripped by mechanical excavator from the proposed roadway, main

building, hard standing and storage areas (Fig. 3). Exposed surfaces and sections of the stripped areas were examined to identify any archaeological features or deposits. However, as the subsoil was not completely removed, it is unlikely that archaeology would have been identified within the stripped area. Within the building plot an additional 29 pits were excavated by mechanical excavator to carry building stanchion supports. These ranged from one to two metres square in size, depending on their position within the proposed building. The sections and bases of these pits were inspected to reveal any archaeological deposits or features.

Any deposits and features revealed were allocated a unique reference number (context number) and assigned individual written descriptions. A photographic record was compiled. Sections were drawn at a scale 1:10 and plans were either at a scale of 1:20 or 1:500.

5. RESULTS

Finds recovered from deposits identified during the watching brief were examined and a date assigned where possible. Records of deposits and features were examined, and a stratigraphic matrix of all recorded contexts was created and phased. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them.

Three phases were identified:

Phase 1 Natural deposits.

Phase 2 Undated features and deposits

Phase 3 Modern deposits.

Phase 1 Natural deposits.

Topsoil stripping in all areas revealed a light orange to yellow very fine silt (002). This deposit had a recorded thickness of 2.4m where exposed during recutting of a ditch

south of the site entrance onto Station Road (Fig. 3). The recutting also revealed an earlier light greyish blue very fine silt (003) with a recorded thickness of 0.4m. Both of these contexts represent naturally derived sediment deposited during past marine incursions into the fen. The recovery of an animal bone from (003) indicates that an ancient land surface might have been disturbed during the recutting of the dyke. However, due to the depth of the excavations, health and safety considerations precluded detailed recording of these deposits.

Phase 2 Undated features and deposits

A northeast-southwest aligned linear gully cut [007] recorded at the north corner of the development and within the proposed roadway is likely to represent land drainage or sub-division. The 0.7m wide and 0.06m deep feature contained a mid to dark brown very fine sandy silt (006) fill. (Fig. 4), (Fig. 6 section 1)

A second, shorter length of gully [009] recorded 1m to the southwest of [007] contained a light brown silt (014) within a dark greyish brown silty very fine sand (008) (Fig. 6 section 2). This 0.6m wide and 0.10m deep gully shares the same alignment as [007] and has very similar dimensions (Fig. 4). The two are likely to be closely associated functionally or actually part of the same feature.

Northwest of gully [009] by c. 1m a 0.25m square cut [011] filled with a dark grey brown fine sandy silt (010) probably represents the remains of a posthole (Fig. 4). A second post hole is likely to be represented by a 0.25m square and 0.09m deep cut (013) recorded 2m northwest of [011] (Fig. 4), (Fig. 6 section 3). The dark grey brown very fine sandy silt fill of this cut

is very similar to that of posthole [010]. A possible association between these two postholes is suggested by their similar dimensions and fills. The post holes are aligned at right angles to gullies [007] and [009] and it is possible that this group of features are contemporary and associated (Fig. 4).

Located approximately 27m southwest of post hole [011] and also within the proposed roadway, a 0.75m by 0.6m and 0.1m deep subrectangular cut (016) was recorded. This feature contained a mid to dark brown grey mixed very fine sandy silt and clay (015) and is likely to represent the remains of a pit, the function of which is unclear (Fig. 4), (Fig. 6 section 4).

Some 60m south of pit [016], within a stanchion pit in the building plot a sinuous east west aligned linear cut [021] was identified (Fig. 5), (Fig. 7). This 0.34m wide and 0.28m deep gully contained a mid grey to dark grey silt (019) primary fill. A mid grey clayey silt with frequent iron pan stains represents the secondary of [021].

Located immediately adjacent to [021] and within the same stanchion pit, a second east-west aligned linear cut [020] contained the same primary fill (019) (Fig. 5), (Fig. 7). A mid grey clayey silt (017) with a blue hue sealed both of these features (Fig. 7).

These features were also recorded in two stanchion pits at the western end of the house plot but were not revealed in plan as the subsoil was not removed during the stripping.

Phase 3 Modern deposits.

In the area reserved for hard standing, two parallel, 20m apart, vertical sided northeast-southwest aligned linear cuts (005) formed part of the modern land drainage system. Both were 0.2m wide, greater than 0.8m deep and

filled with a yellow silt (004).

Sealing all the features and deposits a mid to dark brown, with greyish hue, silt (001) formed a 0.34m thick topsoil.

6. DISCUSSION

Phase 1 deposits represent natural flood silts.

The phase 2 gullies and post holes are likely to represent past land drainage or division, probably associated with agricultural activities. The pit might suggest a low level of peripheral settlement activity although this feature too could be connected purely with agriculture. The lack of dating evidence restricts interpretation of the relationship between features.

Phase 3 deposits confirm agricultural use of the land prior to development.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Three phases were identified of which two represent archaeological activity on the site. The absence of dating and other evidence of human activity suggests the development lies within an area marginal to past human settlement. The nature of the activities represented by the few archaeological remains identified within Phase 2 is unclear, although they are probably best explained as being connected to agricultural processes.

A single animal bone recovered from within Phase 1 deposit (003) represents the entire collection of faunal remains retrieved from the site. A single sherd of unstratified pottery retrieved during topsoil stripping is probably of Roman date. The discovery of isolated sherds of this date is not surprising considering the density of settlement of this period in the Swineshead area.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Mr S. Hemmings, Engineer to the Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board who commissioned the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. Gary Taylor coordinated the work and Tom Lane edited this report. Access to the relevant parish archaeological files was kindly provided by Steven Membrey, the Boston District Community Archaeologist.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Gary Taylor
Site Supervisor: Neil Herbert, René Mouraille,
Gary Taylor, Fiona Walker
Illustration: Phil Mills
Research: Paul Cope-Faulkner
Post-excavation Analyst: Fiona Walker

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ekwall, E., 1974 *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*
- Platts, G., 1985 *Land and People in Medieval Lincolnshire*, History of Lincolnshire IV
- Robson, J.D. 1990. *Soils of the Boston and Spalding District (sheet 131)*, Soil Survey and Land Research Memoirs of the Soil Survey of Great Britain, England and Wales.

11. ABBREVIATIONS

Numbers prefixed 'B' are the reference codes used by the Boston Borough Community Archaeologist.

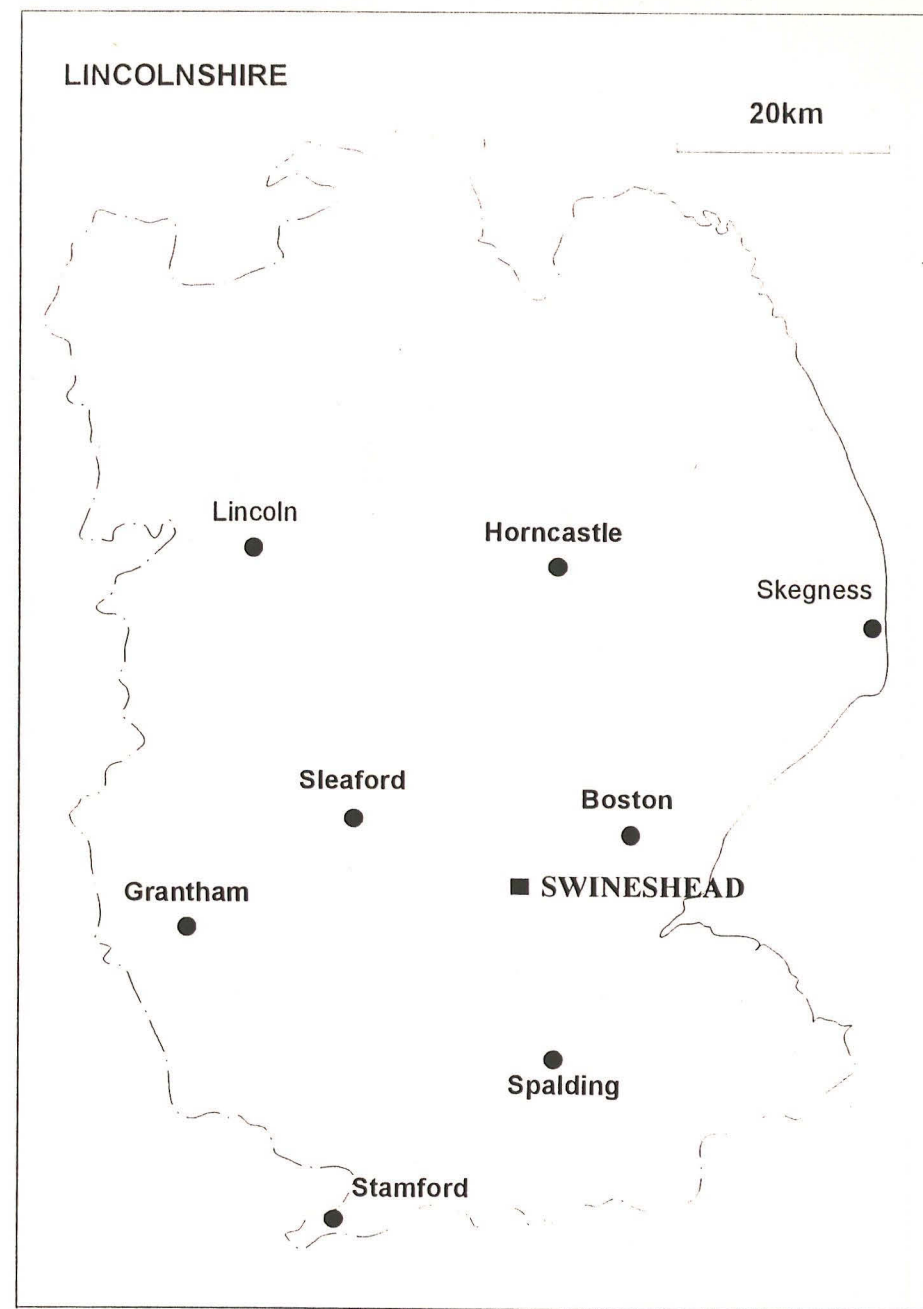


Fig. 1 General Location Plan

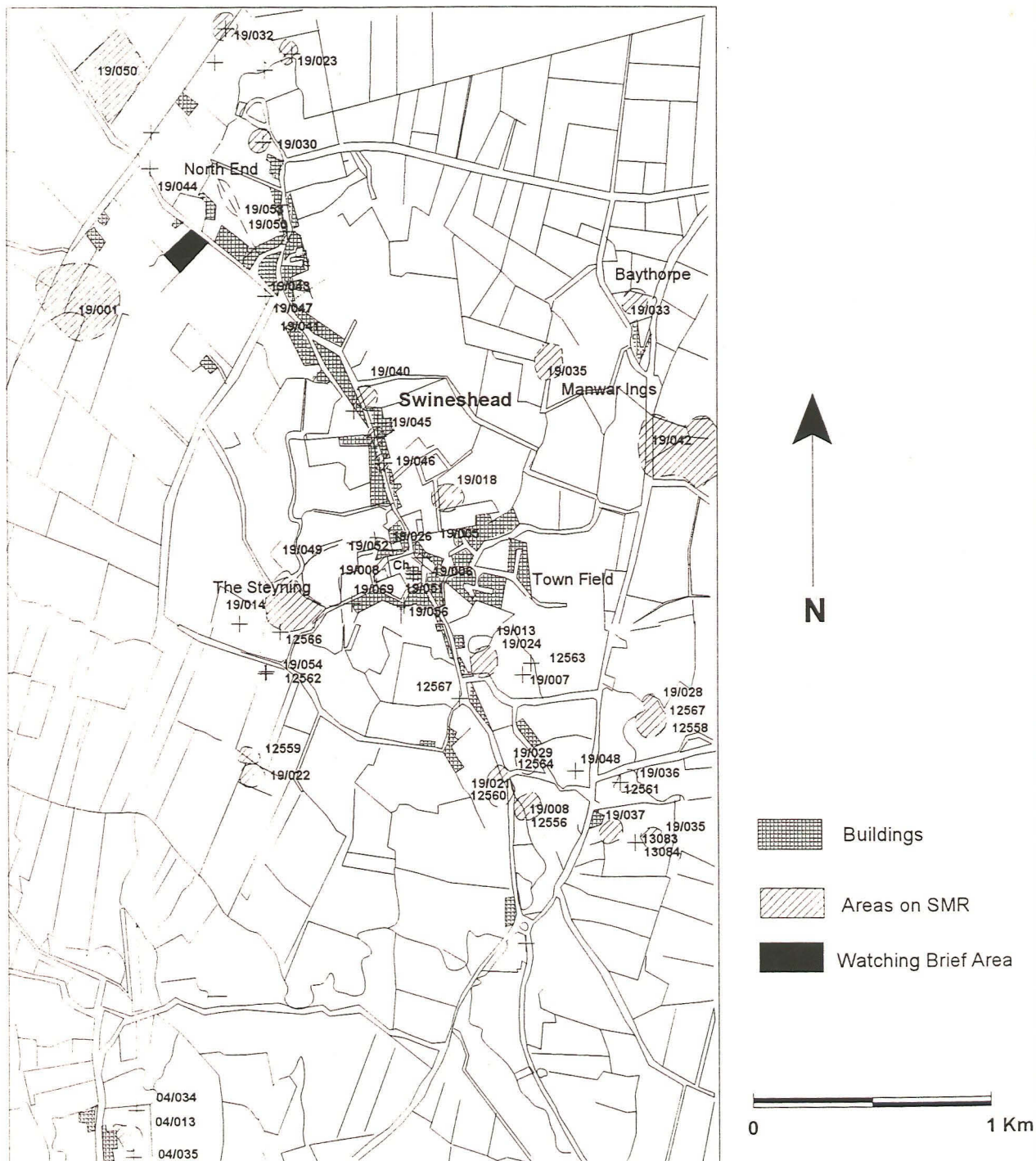


Fig. 2 Swineshead Village

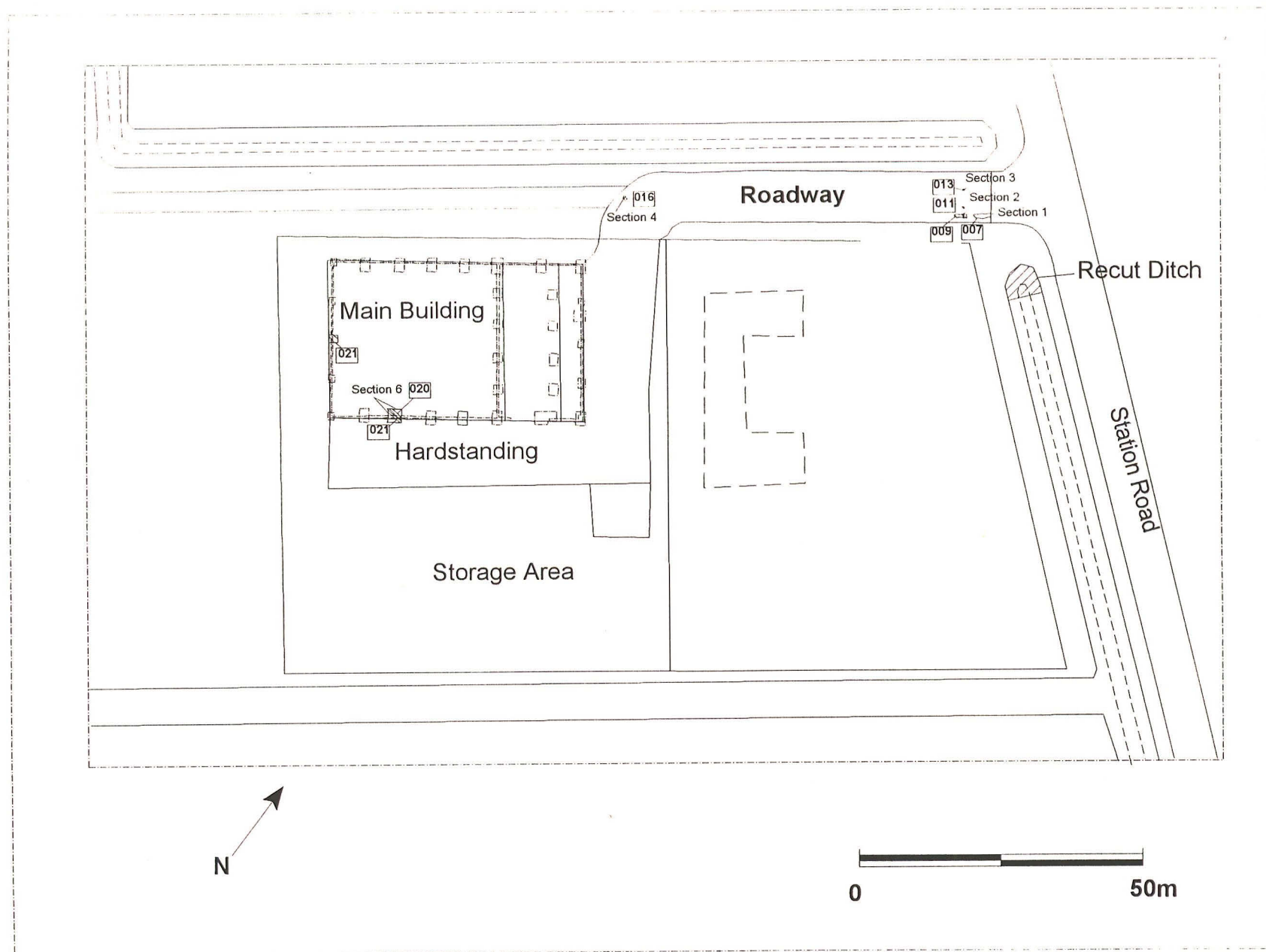


Fig. 3 Site Plan

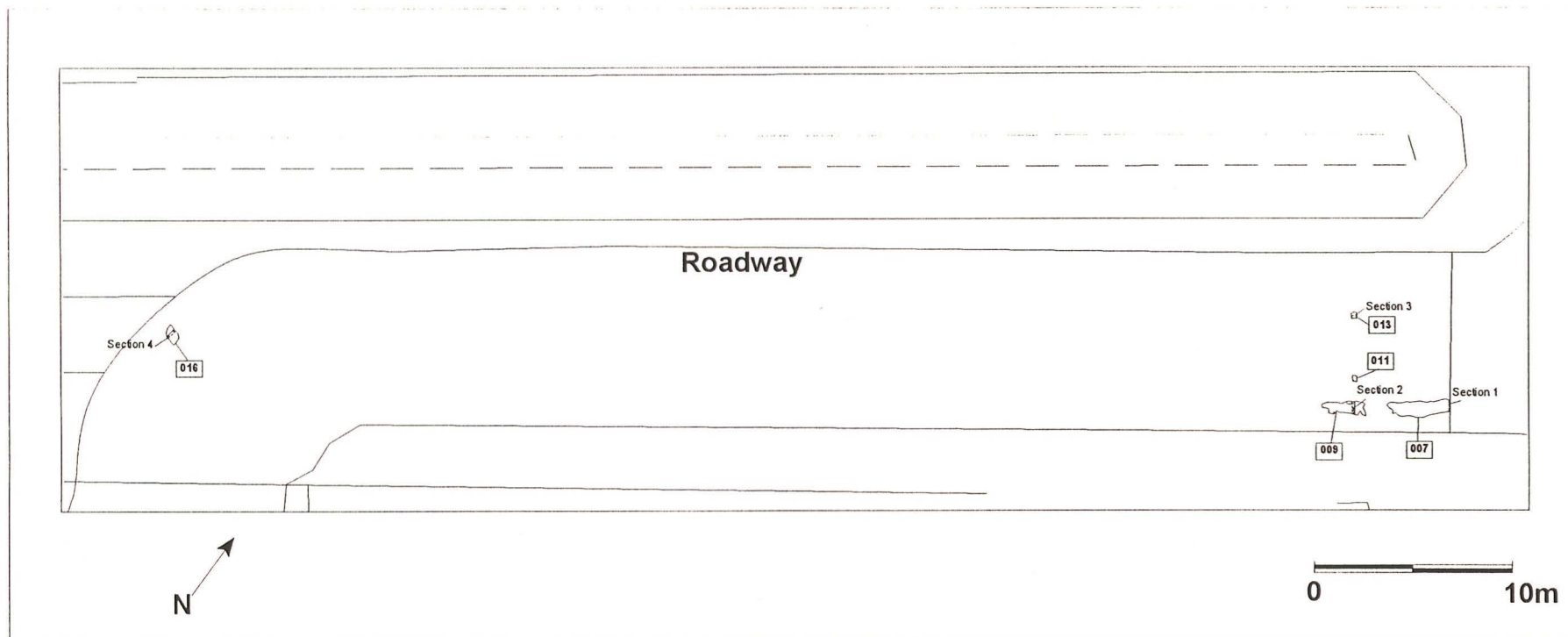


Fig. 4 Plan of Roadway

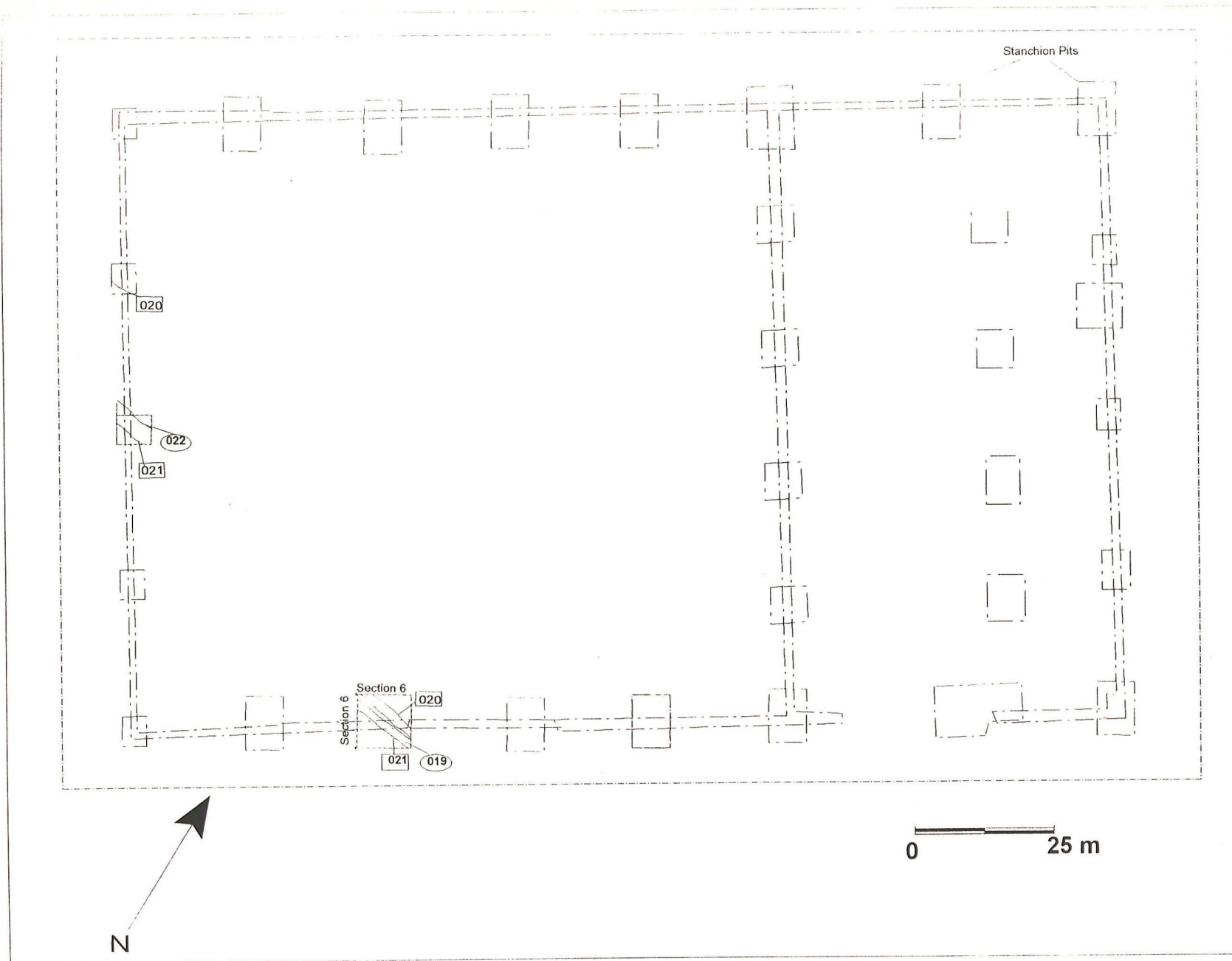


Fig. 5 Plan of Main Building

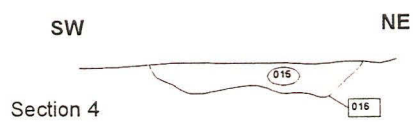
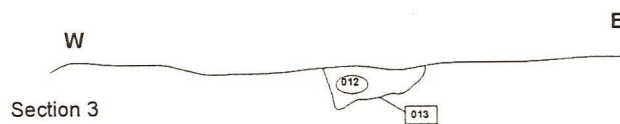
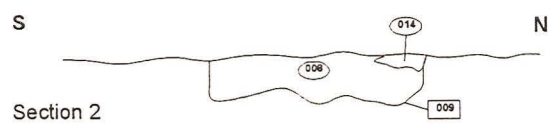
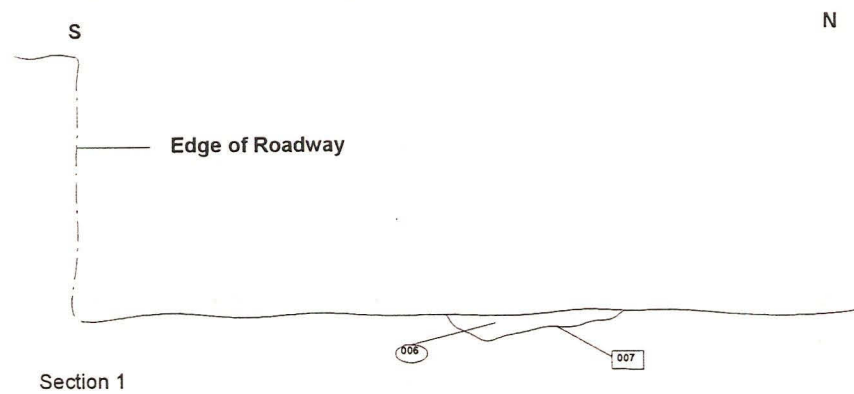


Fig.6 Sections

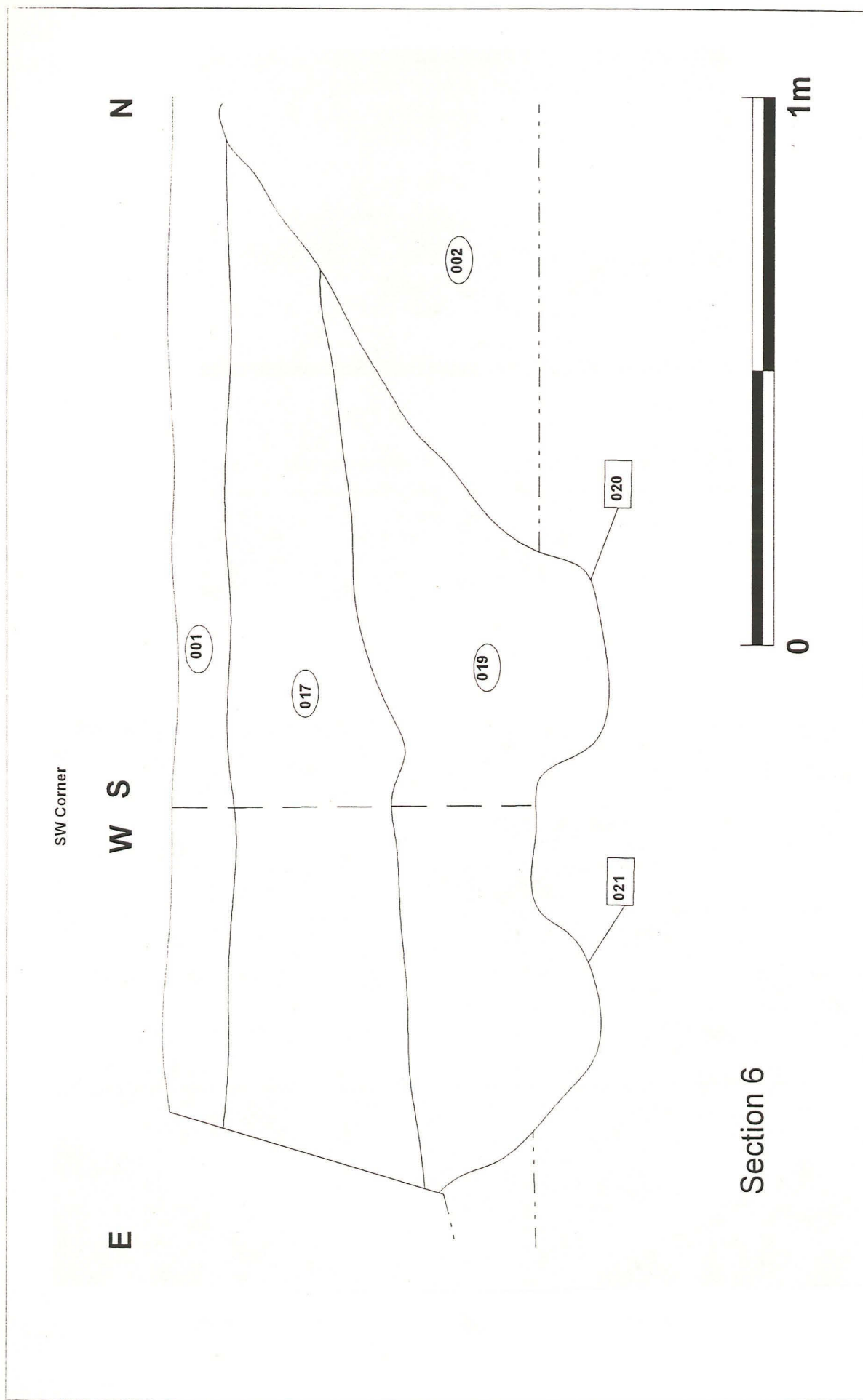


Fig. 7 Stanchion Pit Section



Plate 1 : General view of site, looking north east



Plate 2 : Stanchion pit, showing cuts 020 and 021

Appendix 1
BRIEF FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION AND RECORDING
Land off Station Road, Swineshead, Boston

1. Summary

- 1.1 This document is the brief for archaeological observation and recording work to be carried out during the construction of a depot and office on behalf of Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board.
- 1.2 This brief should be used by archaeological contractors as the basis for the preparation of a detailed archaeological project specification. In response to this brief contractors will include the anticipated working methods, timescales and staffing levels.
- 1.3 The detailed specification will be submitted for approval by the Boston Community Archaeologist. The client will be free to choose between those specifications which are considered to adequately satisfy the brief

2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 Boston is situated in the south Lincolnshire Fens, approximately 45km southeast of Lincoln and 7km from the northwest coast of the Wash. Swineshead is located approximately 9km to the south west of Boston.
- 2.2 The site is situated on Station Road between this road and the A17 bypass to the west, opposite the Mill House at NGR TF22804140 and before the development was used for arable. The site lies at approximately 3m OD and covers roughly 1.8 hectares.

3. Planning Background

- 3.1 A planning application was submitted to Boston Borough Council (B19/0647/95) and granted permission subject to a condition for an archaeological watching brief.
- 3.2 The development will consist of the construction of a workshop (c.45.00m x 25.00m), an office block and areas of hardstanding and carparking. There will also be a degree of landscaping.

4. Archaeological Background

- 4.1 Finds of prehistoric axes have been made in the area to the north of the site.
- 4.2 Evidence for activity during the Roman period is well represented in the parish. The sites of finds of this material from this period are scattered around the site, particularly to the west located through fieldwalking (as well as undated cropmarks) and to the northeast where Romano-British pottery has been located at some depth. Fieldwalking on this site revealed only one piece of Roman pottery.-
- 4.3 The earliest reference to Swineshead occurs after 650 AD in an early Saxon Charter. From then Swineshead grew into a wealthy market town. In 1148 the Cistercian abbey was built, famed for allegedly being the place where King John was poisoned.
- 4.4 Undated remains of a ditch were identified during a watching brief during the construction of a house opposite Vine Cottage at High Bridge. This feature would seem to correspond with a linear feature running approximately east-west identified on aerial photographs.
- 4.5 This site has the potential to reveal Romano-British and perhaps Prehistoric material. It is considered

that any remains from this period are likely to be buried under alluvial deposits and therefore shallow earthmoving will not affect them. The high water content of the feature revealed in the watching brief (4.4 above) suggests that there may be some preservation of organic remains within deep features.

5. Requirements for Work

- 5.1 The objective of the watching brief should be to ensure that any archaeological features exposed by the groundworks are recorded and interpreted.
- 5.2 Any adjustments to the brief for the watching brief project should only be made after consultation with the Community Archaeologist for Boston Borough Council.
- 5.3 The following details should be given in the contractor's specification:
 - 5.3.1 A projected timetable must be agreed for the various stages of work.
 - 5.3.2 The staff structure and numbers must be detailed. This should include lists of specialists and their role in the project.
 - 5.3.3 It is expected that all on-site work will be carried out in a way that complies with the relevant Health and Safety legislation and that due consideration will be given to site security.
 - 5.3.4 The recovery and recording strategies to be used must be described in full.
 - 5.3.5 An estimate of time and resources allocated for the post-excavation work and report production.

6. Methods

- 6.1 The project should be carried out by a recognised archaeological body in accordance with the code of conduct of The Institute of Field Archaeologists.
- 6.2 The watching brief should involve:
 - 6.2.1 archaeological supervision of soil stripping;
 - 6.2.2 inspection of subsoil for archaeological features;
 - 6.2.3 recording of archaeological features in plan;
 - 6.2.4 rapid excavation of features if necessary;
 - 6.2.5 archaeological supervision of subsoil stripping
 - 6.2.6 inspection of natural for archaeological features and recording them.
 - 6.2.7 any human remains encountered must be left in situ and only removed if absolutely necessary. The contractor must comply with all statutory consents and licences regarding the exhumation and interment of human remains. It will also be necessary to comply with all reasonable requests of interested parties as to the remains or associated items. Attempt must be made at all times not to cause offence to any interested parties.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

- 7.1 The Community Archaeologist of Boston Borough Council will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project and will require at least seven days notice prior to the

commencement of the work.

8. Reporting Requirements

8.1 A full report should be produced and deposited with the developers agent, the Boston Borough Council Community Archaeologist, and the County sites and Monuments Record. The report should include:

8.1.1 location plan of the trenches;

8.1.2 section and plan drawing, with ground level, Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scales as appropriate;

8.1.3 specialist descriptions of artefacts and ecofacts;

8.1.4 an indication of potential archaeological deposits not disturbed by the present development;

8.2 After agreement with the landowner, arrangements are made for long term storage of all artefacts and paper archive in an appropriate museum.

8.3 If the receiving museum is to be the City and County Museum, Lincoln then the archive should be produced in the form outlined in the museum's document 'Conditions for the Acceptance of Project Archives', see address below.

9. Publication and Dissemination

9.1 The deposition of a copy of the report with the Lincolnshire Sites and Monuments Record will be deemed to put all information into the public domain, unless a special request is made for confidentiality. If material is to be held in confidence a timescale must be agreed with the Boston Community Archaeologist but is expected this will not exceed six months. Consideration must be given to a summary of the results being published in Lincolnshire History and Archaeology in due course.

10. Additional Information

10.1 This document attempts to define the best practice expected of an archaeological watching brief but cannot fully anticipate the conditions that will be encountered as work progresses. However, changes to the programme are only to be made with the prior written approval of the Community Archaeologist.

Brief set by Jim Bonnor Community Archaeologist for Boston Borough Council 23/04/96

APPENDIX 2

CONTEXT DESCRIPTION

Context	Description	Interpretation
001	Mid-dark brown, with a dark greyish hue, silt. Depth of c. 0.34m	Plough soil/topsoil deposit
002	Light orange to yellow very fine silt. Thickness 2.4m	Natural deposit
003	Light greyish blue very fine silt. Thickness seen 0.4m but not bottomed	Natural deposit
004	Yellow silt. Seen for 12m length by 0.2m wide and depth of 0.8m but was not bottomed.	Fill of linear 005
005	Linear cut, aligned northeast-southwest. Vertical sided 0.2m wide, a 12m length was recorded to a depth of 0.8m but was not bottomed. There was another similarly aligned feature 20m to the southeast of this cut.	Pipe trench/land drain
006	Mid to dark grey brown very fine sandy silt. Deposit was 3m long x 0.7m wide x 0.06m deep	Fill of 007
007	Linear cut, aligned northeast-southwest. Seen 3m length, 0.7m wide and 0.06m deep. On same line and 1m gap between 007 and 009	Gully
008	Dark grey brown silty very fine sand. 2.5m length, 0.6m width depth 0.1m	Fill of 009
009	Linear cut, aligned northeast-southwest. Seen for 2m length. 0.6m wide and 0.1m deep. On same line and 1m gap between 009 and 007	Gully

010	Dark grey brown very fine sandy silt. Seen in patch 0.25m square	Fill of 011
011	Rectangular cut, was 0.25m square and un excavated. Possibly related to 013	Posthole
012	Dark grey brown very fine sandy silt. Seen in 0.25m square patch to depth of 0.09m	Fill of 013
013	Subrectangular cut, c. 0.25m square and 0.09m deep. Possibly related to 011	Posthole
014	Light beige silt, within deposit 008?	Fill of 009
015	Mid to dark brown grey mixed very fine sandy silt and clay. Seen in 0.75m x 0.55m patch to a depth of 0.1m	Fill of 016
016	Subrectangular cut, 0.75m x 0.6m and 0.1m deep	Pit cut
017	Mid grey, with blue hue, clayey silt. North-south c. 1.5m, seen east-west for 0.68m to a depth of 0.3m	Upper fill of cuts 020 and 021
018	Mid grey clayey silt. Seen north-south 0.87m, east-west unknown depth 0.13m.	Fill of 020
019	Mid to dark grey silt. Seen north-south 0.7m, east-west 0.8m thickness 0.32m	Fill of cuts 020 and 021
020	Linear cut, aligned roughly east-west. Width 0.3m, length seen 2.4m and was 0.47m deep. 020 and 021 may converge further to the east if both the features continue that far.	Gully

021	Linear cut, aligned roughly east-west. Width 0.34m, length seen 2.4m and was 0.28m deep. 020 and 021 may converge further to the east if both the features continue that far.	Gully
022	Mid grey, with blue hue, clayey silt. Length seen c. 1.8m, width 0.7m	Fill of 021
023	Mid redish grey silty clay. Width 1.75m and c. 1.4m length seen	Fill of 020

Appendix 3

Finds Summary

Bones looked at by Paul Cope-Faulkner
and
Pottery looked at by Hilary Healey and Gary Taylor

Context	Description	Date
+	Iron object	
+	Part of a battery	20th century
+	Pot or part of a drain pipe	20th century
+	Clinker fragment	
+	Tile/drain fragment	
+	Fragment of skull, cow sized	
+	Two fragments of brick/tile	
+	Grey ware pottery fragment	?Roman
001	Two pieces of pot	20th century
001	Lump of ceramic building material	
003	Piece of a cows radius, showing butchery marks	
008	Iron object possibly a nail	

APPENDIX 4

The Archive

The archive consists of:

- 23 . Context Records
- 19 . Photographs
- 11 . Scale Drawings
- 1 . . Stratigraphic Matrix
- 12 . Bags of finds (in one box).

All primary records are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services
The Old School
Cameron Street
Heckington
Lincolnshire
NG34 9RW

The ultimate destination of the project archive is:

Lincolnshire City and County Museum
12 Friars Lane
Lincoln
LN2 1HQ

The archive will be deposited in accordance with the document titled *Conditions for the Acceptance of Project Archives*, produced by the Lincolnshire City and County Museum.

Lincolnshire City and County Museum Accession Number:	40.97
Archaeological Project Services Site Code:	SSR97

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Appendix 5

Glossary

Anglo-Scandiavian	Pertaining to the period during which the Anglo-Saxons and Vikings entered and occupied Britain, dating from approximately AD 400-1066.
Bronze Age	Part of the prehistoric era characterised by the introduction and use of bronze for tools and weapons. In Britain this period dates from approximately 2000-700 BC.
Context	An archaeological context represents a distinct archaeological event or process. For example, the action of digging a pit creates a context (the cut) as does the process of its subsequent backfill (the fill). Each context encountered during an archaeological investigation is allocated a unique number by the archaeologist and a record sheet detailing the description and interpretation of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, <i>e.g.</i> (4).
Cut	A cut refers to the physical action of digging a posthole, pit, ditch, foundation trench, <i>etc.</i> Once the fills of these features are removed during an archaeological investigation the original 'cut' is therefore exposed and subsequently recorded.
Dumped deposits	These are deposits, often laid down intentionally, that raise a land surface. They may be the result of casual waste disposal or may be deliberate attempts to raise the ground surface.
Fill	Once a feature has been dug it begins to silt up (either slowly or rapidly) or it can be back-filled manually. The soil(s) which become contained by the 'cut' are referred to as its fill(s).
Late Saxon	The latter part of the Saxon period, upto the time of the Norman conquest. The period dates from approximately AD 850-1066.
Layer	A layer is a term used to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
Medieval	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
Natural	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity.
Post-medieval	The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.
Prehistoric	The period of human history prior to the introduction of writing. In Britain the prehistoric period lasts from the first evidence of human occupation about 500,000 BC, until the Roman invasion in the middle of the 1st century AD.
Romano-British	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.