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**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
AT THE GILES SCHOOL,
OLD LEAKE,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(OLG97)**



A P S
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES

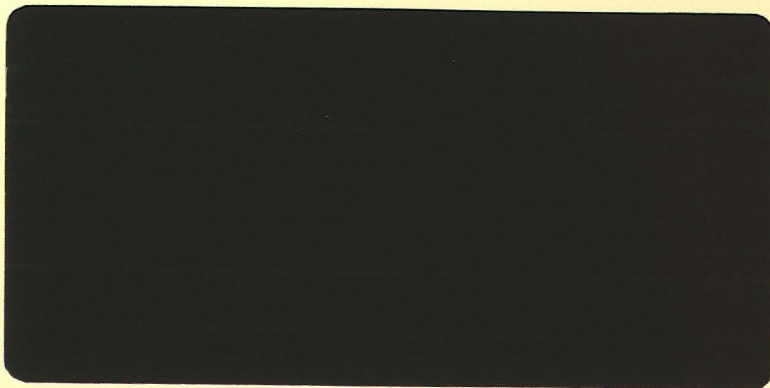
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**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
AT THE GILES SCHOOL,
OLD LEAKE,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(OLG97)**

Work Undertaken For
Architects Joint Partnership
Limited

Report compiled by
Paul Cope-Faulkner
and Denise Drury

December 1997

Planning Application No: B16/0306/97
National Grid Reference: TF 4086 5002
City and County Museum Accession No: 255.97

A.P.S. Report No: 70/97

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1. SUMMARY

A watching brief was undertaken to determine the archaeological implications of the proposed development on land to the south of The Giles School, Old Leake, Boston, Lincolnshire. Finds of Late Saxon and medieval date have been recorded in the locality. In particular, archaeological features containing Anglo-Saxon and medieval pottery were discovered during previous construction work in the school grounds.

The watching brief on the foundation trenches revealed a largely natural sequence of deposits, including an accumulation of silts. Two features of possible archaeological interest were identified cut into the silt deposits. No finds evidence was recovered to aid the dating of these features. The whole area was covered by a silt clay deposit and topsoil.

Evidence of modern activity included the remains of bases of a greenhouse and garage which formerly occupied part of the site. Only limited disturbance had been caused to the underlying deposits by their construction. The only artefacts identified during the watching brief were modern, associated with the more recent use of the site.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

Between the 31st October and the 4th November 1997, an archaeological watching brief was undertaken within the southern portion of the grounds of The Giles School, Old Leake, Boston, Lincolnshire. Approval for the development was sought through the submission of planning application B16/0306/97. Permission was granted

subject to a standard condition for archaeological recording. The investigation was commissioned by Architects Joint Partnership Limited of Kent (AJPL). Archaeological Project Services carried out the work according to the brief provided by the Community Archaeologist for the Borough of Boston (Appendix 1).

An archaeological watching brief is defined as 'a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological purposes within a specified area, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed.' (IFA 1994, 1).

2.2 Topography, Geology and Soils

Old Leake is situated approximately 8km to the north-east of Boston, in the Fenland of south Lincolnshire (Fig.1).

The development area was located within the grounds of The Giles School at Old Leake (Fig 2). The site was situated between 3m and 3.5m OD on fairly level land bounded by School Lane to the west, the A52 to the south, and the B1184 to the east (National Grid Reference TF 4087 5001). The area cleared of topsoil to accommodate the footings measured approximately 25m by 19m (Fig 3).

Local soils are of the Wallasea Series, typically pelo-alluvial gley soils mixed with the Wisbech soils on creek ridges (Robson 1985, 32). To the northeast soils are of the Stockwith Series, calcareous alluvial gley soils (*ibid.* 34). Both these soils are developed on stoneless marine alluvium. Beneath this marine alluvium is glacial drift that was deposited in a geological basin between the Lincolnshire Wolds and the East Anglian Heights (Harden 1978, 5). These glacial deposits in turn overlie a solid geology of Jurassic

clays, probably the Ampthill formation (BGS 1995).

2.3 Archaeological Setting

Old Leake is situated in an area of known archaeological remains dating from the Saxon period. However, there is possibility of earlier remains, especially of Iron Age and Romano-British date to be located within the parish as extensive survey by the Fenland Project in the neighbouring parish of Wrangle revealed activity of these periods (Lane 1993).

Old Leake is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086. Referred to as 'Leche', the name is derived from the Old English *lece* and refers simply to 'brook' (Ekwall 1974, 292). The Domesday Survey records that Old Leake was sokeland of Drayton and was owned by Count Alan and contained 41 salt-pans and 34 acres of meadow (Foster and Longley 1976, 68).

Medieval remains are best represented by the parish church of St Mary, 300m northwest of the site, which dates to the 12th century with additions in the late 13th, 14th and 15th centuries (Doe 1987, 59). The church is surrounded by a ditch which has been referred to as the 'moat' (B16/006). A group of earthworks, known as the Dylings, are located 500m north of the proposed development (B16/012). Dylings are usually long strips in pasture, broader than ridge and furrow, used to make the central area higher and are documented from the 14th century (Healey 1997).

Finds of medieval date are known from the village and consist largely of pottery (B16/004 and 007).

Archaeological intervention has occurred in the village and includes a watching brief at The Giles School (Tann 1995). This

watching brief identified three ditches, possibly representing 3 phases of one ditch and six pits with pottery dating from the Late Saxon to medieval periods. It was thought that the ditch may represent the eastern boundary of a possible habitation area (*ibid.* 10). If so, the new teaching block would fall outside the possible habitation area. Other archaeological work in the village has also identified the early origins of the village with finds of Saxon pottery (Palmer-Brown 1995 a and b).

3. AIMS

The requirements of the watching brief, as set by the brief (Appendix 1), were to locate and record archaeological deposits, if present, and to determine their date, function and origin.

4. METHODS

The proposed development required topsoil stripping to a depth of 0.20m to 0.30m below the present ground level, over an area measuring approximately 25m by 19m, in order to accommodate the building foundations. The initial topsoil strip and the removal of a turf covered topsoil mound at the eastern edge of the development area was undertaken by a mechanical excavator fitted with a large toothless bucket. Footing trenches were then excavated at the edges of the stripped area and crossing the plot (Fig 3). The footings varied in width between 0.60m and 0.80m and were 1.20m deep (below ground surface). The footings were excavated with a narrow toothed bucket allowing limited opportunity for the identification of features in plan, but producing relatively clean, vertical sections.

The removal of the turf and topsoil mound

and the topsoil overburden was monitored and the exposed surfaces inspected for archaeological features. No features, other than modern intrusions, were identified at this level. The footings were monitored during excavation and/or the resultant sections inspected, cleaned and recorded as appropriate.

The depth and thickness of each deposit was measured from the present ground surface. Each deposit or feature revealed was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. Natural deposits were also recorded. Sections of the exposed deposits and features were drawn at scales of 1:10 or 1:20 and a plan produced at a scale of 1:100 showing the location of each section. A photographic record was also compiled.

5. RESULTS

5.1 Description of the results

Records of the deposits and features recognised during the watching brief were also examined. A list of all contexts and interpretations appears as Appendix 2. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them. A stratigraphic matrix of all identified deposits was produced. Three phases were identified:

- Phase 1: Natural deposits
- Phase 2: Undated archaeological deposits
- Phase 3: Modern deposits

Archaeological contexts are described below, the numbers in brackets () are the context numbers assigned in the field.

5.2 Phase 1: Natural deposits

The earliest deposits revealed in the

footing trenches comprised mottled pale brown (015) and yellowish brown (016) silts which were exposed between 1.00m and 1.10m below the present ground level in the eastern portion of the site. These deposits sloped down to the west and were not visible in the profiles in the western half of the site. The silts were overlain by a depth (up to 0.70m) of pale yellowish brown very silty clay with iron staining (007) which extended across the whole site (Fig 4, section 4). This deposit also sloped down from east to west, lying at 0.50m below the ground surface in the eastern half of the site and 0.90m below the ground surface at the western edge of the excavated area.

5.3 Phase 2: Undated archaeology

Two features were observed cutting the deposit of silty clay (007). One small feature (010) was observed in section at the western edge of the site (Fig 4, section 1 and Plate 2). It was a flat-based feature with steeply sloping sides measuring 0.42m across and 0.25m deep, filled with a pale brown silty clay (009) containing a few small fragments of shell and flecks of charcoal. The upper boundary of the fill was marked by some concentration of black flecking and lensing. It was not clear whether this feature had in fact been cut from a higher level. A deposit of yellowish brown silty clay (011) overlying the pale brown fill, 009, may have suggested an upper fill, although there were no clear boundaries for the deposit which petered out to the north and south to merge with the overlying material (008). There was no evidence of the feature in the opposite section (0.70m distant).

Deposit 008 comprised a light brown very silty clay with brownish yellow mottles which was only observed in the north-western corner of the site. To the south and the east the deposit merged with an

overlying deposit of light brown silty clay (006) which covered the whole of the area observed. At the western edge of the site this deposit was up to 0.70m deep (Fig 4, section 2) becoming shallower to the east (0.20m - 0.30m), reflecting the slope in the underlying silt (007), to give a fairly level ground surface.

The second feature identified lay in the centre of the site (Fig 4, section 3). It was a fairly shallow linear feature aligned approximately east - west (014). It measured 0.40m in width and 0.30m deep. Its primary fill comprised a shallow layer (0.08m deep) of black silt containing some fragments of shell, overlain by a yellowish brown clay silt (013) mottled with lenses of black silt with a few small fragments of shell. This feature was also sealed below layer 006.

5.4 Phase 3: Modern activity

Overlying the silty clay subsoil, 006, there was a depth of topsoil (004), up to 0.30m deep, containing modern (twentieth century) finds (this material was not retrieved). The area of the site had formerly been cultivated, as part of the school gardens (*pers comm* on-site contractor), and the artefacts and modern features noted in the area were in keeping with this use. The concrete and rubble base of a green house (002) and path, and the brick and concrete base of a garage (003) were noted.

At the eastern edge of the site, overlying the topsoil, was a shallow spread of sand (005) which was in turn overlain by a mound of turf covered topsoil (001) containing modern building debris. The mound lay on a north - south axis, measuring approximately 30m in length and standing to a height of c1m. The mound and underlying sand deposit were most probably the result of topsoil

clearance from the construction of the adjacent car park (*pers comm* on-site contractor).

6. DISCUSSION

The watching brief on land south at The Giles School, Old Leake revealed a series of silt and clayey silt deposits of natural origin (Phase 1) with a pronounced slope down to the west (toward School Lane) at the western edge of the site. These silty deposits were probably the result of marine inundation.

The absence of artefactual evidence means that neither of the two features (Phase 2), truncating the upper boundary of these deposits, can be dated. Nor is it possible to determine whether the two features were contemporary. The linear feature (014) may well have represented a shallow ditch, however, the form and function of the other cut feature (010) at the western edge of the site remains unclear.

The depth of deposits observed at the western edge of the site may well be the result of the natural accumulation of deposits over a slope.

The modern activity (Phase 3) comprised a greenhouse and garage associated with the former use of the area, together with a more recent topsoil mound.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The archaeological watching brief at The Giles School, Old Leake was undertaken in order to determine whether evidence of medieval activity survived here as suggested by discoveries made to the north of the site. Previous finds nearby confirm a late Saxon and medieval presence in this area.

The results, although limited by the conditions under which the observations were made, do not suggest a high level of activity on the site. Significantly no finds other than modern (twentieth century material) were identified. The limited evidence for occupation together with the absence of finds reinforce the suggestion that there was little activity within this particular area.

It may be that this area lay beyond the settlement area identified during archaeological investigations (Tann 1995) within the school grounds, c70m to the north of the present site. It would seem that the area of occupation may have lain to the north, toward the church, rather than to the south of the ditch previously identified in the grounds.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services would like to acknowledge the assistance of Mr David Swarbrick of Architects Joint Partnership Limited who commissioned the fieldwork and analysis. Access to the construction site and copies of development plans were kindly supplied by A.G. Brown and Son (Building Contractors). Steven Membury, the Community Archaeologist for Boston District Council permitted examination of the relevant files maintained by the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor and this report was edited by Tom Lane.

9. PERSONNEL

Project coordinator: Gary Taylor
Watching brief: Denise Drury
Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner
Report compilation: Paul Cope-Faulkner and Denise Drury

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10. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services
BGS British Geological Survey

DoE Department of the Environment
IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists
LAS Lindsey Archaeological Services
PCA Pre-Construct Archaeology
(Lincoln)

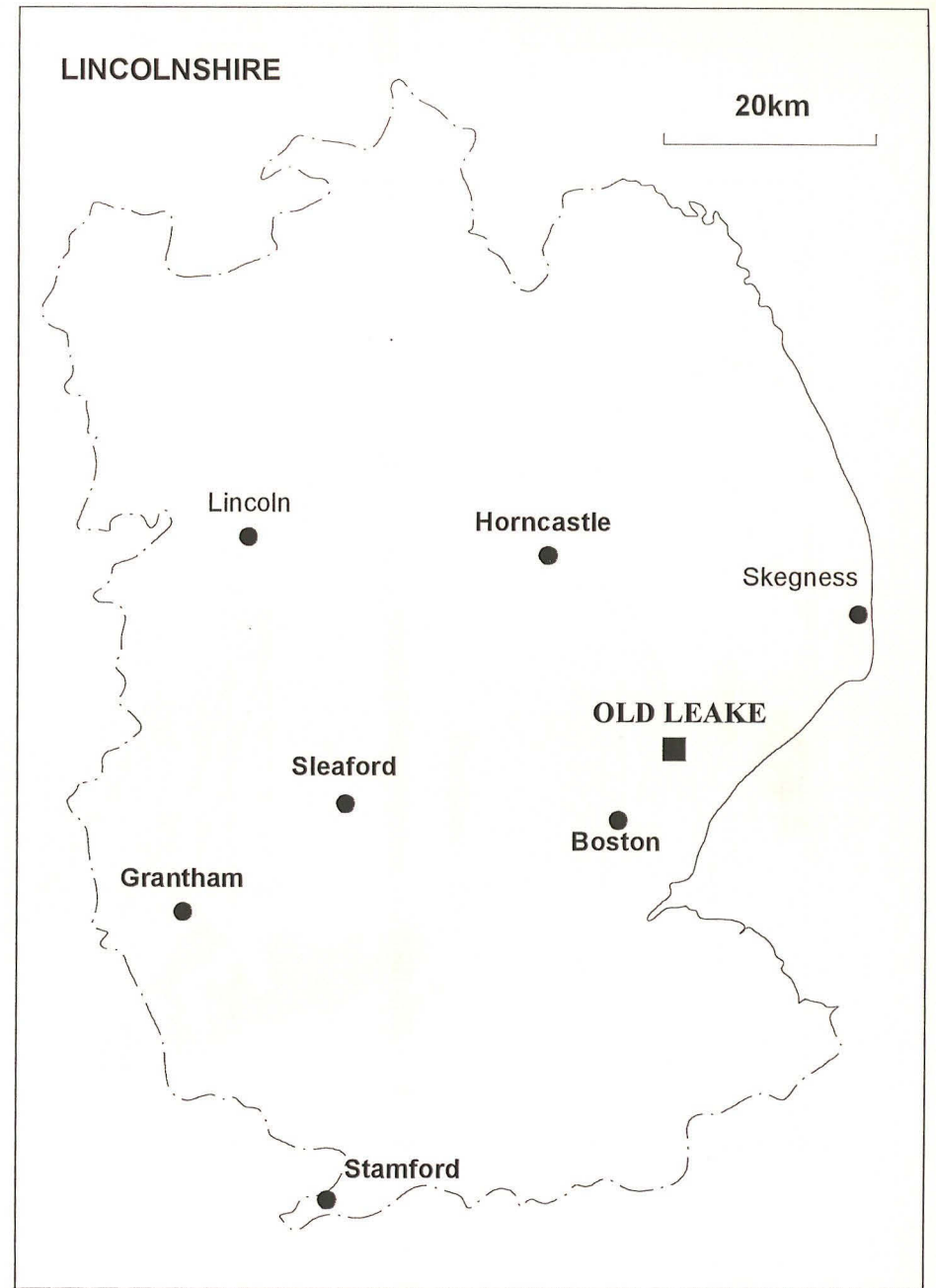
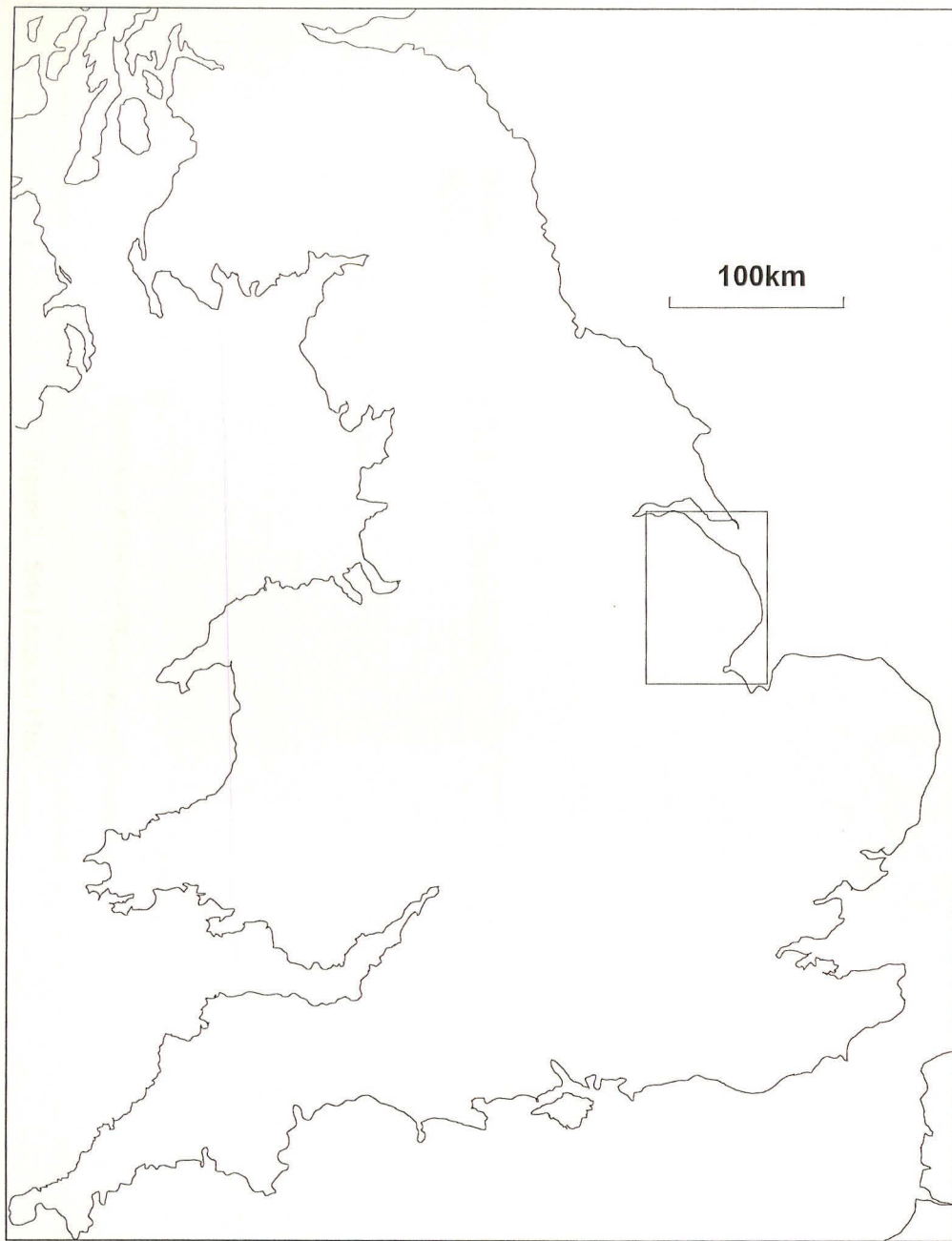


Figure 1 - General Location Plan



 Proposed School Extension

 Built-up Areas

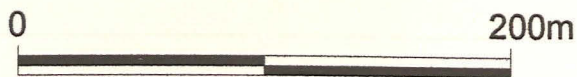


Figure 2 - Site Location Plan

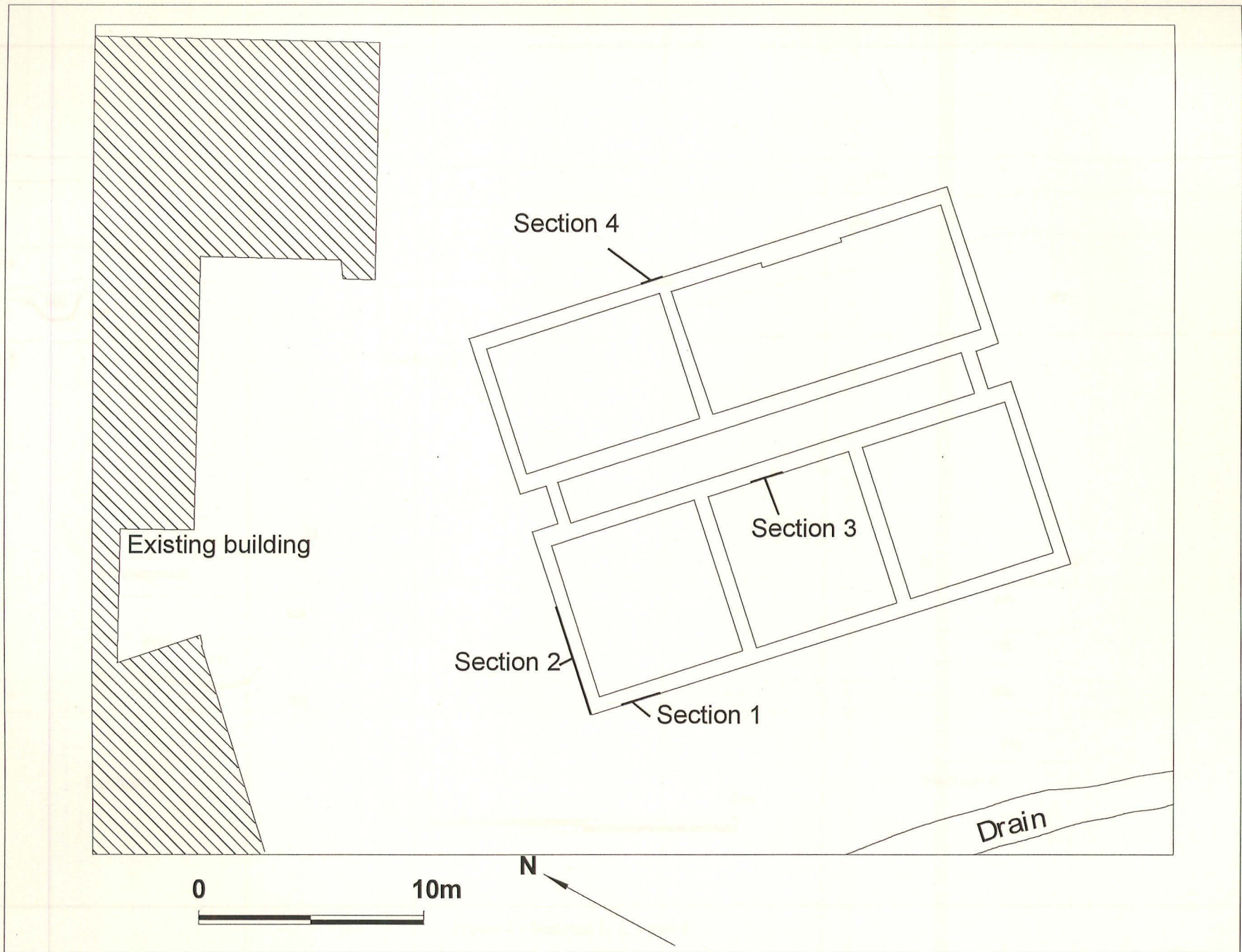


Figure 3 - Foundation Plan, showing Section locations

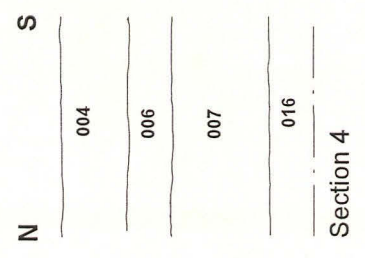
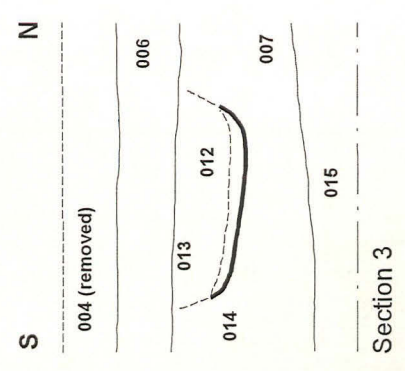
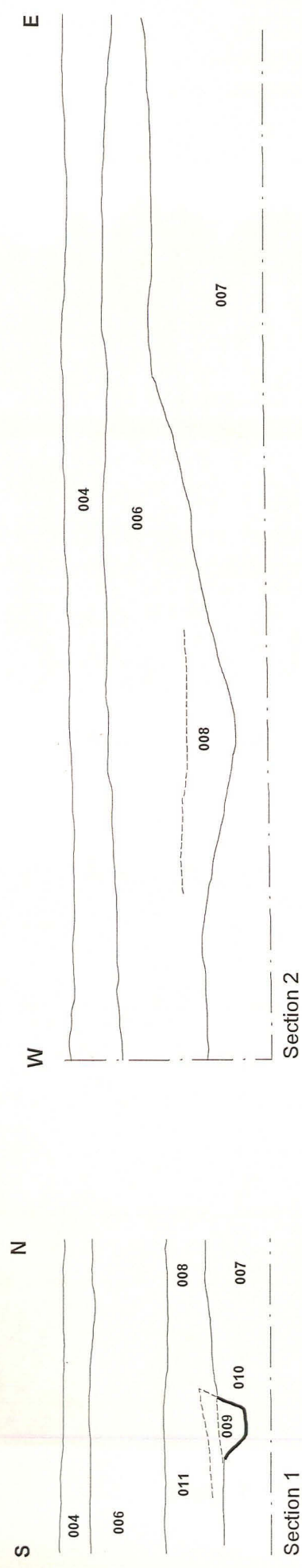


Figure 4 - Sections 1, 2, 3 and 4



Plate 1 : General view of development area, looking south

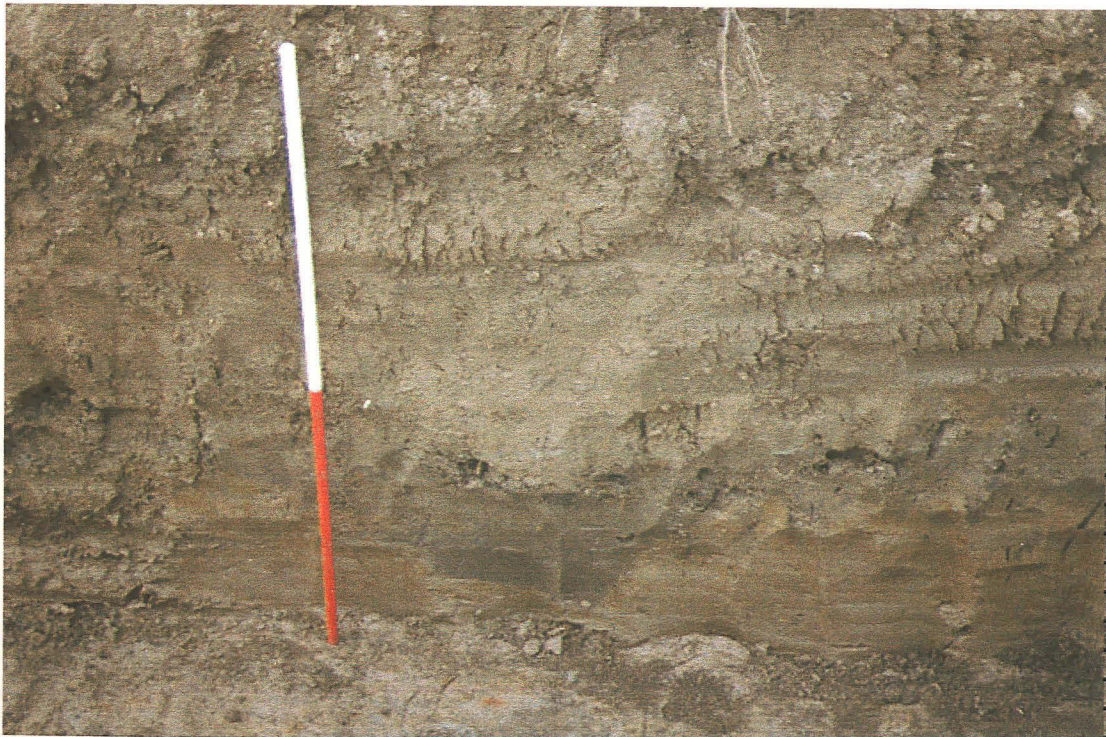


Plate 2 : View of Section 1, feature (010)

Appendix 1

BRIEF FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION AND RECORDING New Teaching Block, The Giles School, Old Leake, 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 new teaching block, The Giles School, Old Leake, Boston.
- 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. Old Leake is situated approximately 8km northeast of Boston.
- 2.2 The development is situated within the grounds of The Giles School, Old Leake, Boston.

3. Planning Background

- 3.1 This brief was written in response to a request for advice by Architects Joint Partnership Limited.

4. Archaeological Background

- 4.1 No Prehistoric or Romano-British material has been recorded within the confines of the parish, although evidence from the adjacent parish of Wrangle supports the occupation\utilisation of this part of the Fens during these periods. Large numbers of salt-making sites have been recognised by surface scatters associated with Iron Age and/or Roman pottery from Wrangle.
- 4.2 Late Saxon material has been recovered from Old Leake but there is an absence of earlier evidence concerning the period between the fifth and the ninth centuries in both this parish and Wrangle. Late Saxon artefacts are known from the locality including pottery from earlier work on this site, as well as further to the north-west and southeast. Features of this period were encountered in stratified sequence during the evaluation phase of a development at Church Road, which was carried out in August 96 (Church Road, Old Leake, Desk-Top study and Field Evaluation Report, & Archaeological Evaluation Report, LCCM Accession No. 59.96)
- 4.3 Old Leake is recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086 as Leake or *Leche* (translation 'place at a stream')
- 4.4 The only surviving Norman structure is (elements of) St Mary's Church which appears to have been as large a building in the twelfth century as it is now.
- 4.5 Medieval earthworks occur near the site in the form of the Dylings, a complex feature which has not

yet been the subject of an extensive survey

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 It should be expected that evidence associated with Late Saxon and medieval activity and later medieval and post medieval activity will be observed.
- 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. The Community Archaeologist should be kept informed of any unexpected discoveries and regularly updated on project's status. Access to the site shall be allowed at their convenience and they will comply with any health and safety requirements.

8. Reporting Requirements

- 8.1 A full report should be produced and deposited with the Boston Borough Council Community Archaeologist, Robert Lowe Architects 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'.

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.

Appendix 2

CONTEXT SUMMARY

Context Number	Description	Interpretation
001	Friable, mid-brown slightly clay loam. 30m in length, 5m wide, and up to 1m high.	Modern mound of topsoil.
002	Concrete and rubble surface. 5.5m long and 2.60m wide.	Concrete base for a greenhouse.
003	Concrete and brick surface. 6.20m long, 5m wide, and up to 0.3m thick.	Concrete base for a garage.
004	Friable, mid-brown slightly clay loam. Between 0.2m and 0.3m thick.	Topsoil deposit.
005	Friable, pale brownish yellow fine silty sand. Approximately 0.1m thick.	Modern deposit of sand, overlying (004).
006	Firm light brown silty clay. Between 0.2m and 0.7m thick. Deposit becomes deeper toward the western edge of the site.	Subsoil.
007	Soft, mottled pale yellowish brown silty clay and silt. Up to 0.7m thick.	Natural subsoil deposit.
008	Soft, mottled light brown silty clay. Between 0.4m and 0.5m thick. Contains some charcoal flecks and small fragments of shell.	Naturally deposited.
009	Soft, plastic, very pale brown silty clay containing a few shell fragments and charcoal flecks. 0.25m thick.	Fill of (010).
010	Cut feature with steeply sloping sides and a flat base. 0.42m wide and 0.25m deep.	Cut feature, function unclear. Filled by (009).
011	Soft, sticky, yellowish brown silty clay. Up to 0.2m thick. Contains a few charcoal flecks.	Part of deposit (008)?
012	Soft black silt containing some shell fragments. 0.08m thick.	Primary fill of (014).
013	Mottled yellowish brown clay silt. 1m wide and 0.20m deep.	Fill of (014), overlying (012).
014	Linear feature 1m wide and 0.3m deep. Recorded in section, length unknown.	Possible shallow ditch cutting (007). Filled by (012) and (013).
015	Soft, pale brown clay silt and silt with yellowish brown mottles. 0.3m+ thick.	Naturally deposited silt.
016	Soft, mottled yellowish brown and grey brown silt. 0.2m+ thick.	Naturally deposited silt.

Appendix 3

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

16	Context records
4	Scale drawings
1	Photographic Record Sheet
1	Stratigraphic matrix

All primary records and finds are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services
The Old School
Cameron Street
Heckington
Sleaford
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 entitled *Conditions for the Acceptance of Project Archives*, produced by the Lincolnshire City and County Museum.

Archaeological Project Services project code: OLG97
City and County Museum, Lincoln Accession Number: 255.97

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Appendix 4

GLOSSARY

Anglo-Saxon	Pertaining to the period following the Roman era when Britain was invaded, settled and ruled by Angles, Saxons and other peoples from mainland Europe. The period dates from approximately AD 450-1066.
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> (004).
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).
Iron Age	Part of the prehistoric era characterised by the introduction and use of iron for tools and weapons. In Britain this period dates from approximately 700 BC - AD 50.
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	Deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity.
Post-medieval	Following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.
Romano-British	Pertaining to the period when Britain formed part of the Roman empire, dating from AD 43-410.