

43712 - Updated
43731 - Medieval.

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION REPORT
LAND OFF LINCOLN ROAD, SKEGNESS,
LINCOLNSHIRE**

Site Code: LRS98
LCNCC Acc No. 117.98
NGR TF 55155 640470

Lincolnshire County Council
Archaeology Section

22 MAY 98

Report prepared for Willmott Dixon Housing Ltd
by Robert Schofield
May 1998

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln)
61 High Street
Newton on Trent
Lincoln
LN1 2JP
Tel. & Fax. 01777 228155

Contents

Summary	1
1.0 Introduction	2
2.0 Location and description	2
3.0 Archaeological and historical background	2
4.0 The objectives of field evaluation	3
5.0 Methodology	4
6.0 Results	4
6.1 Trench 1	4
6.2 Trench 2	6
6.3 Trench 3	7
6.4 Trench 4	8
7.0 Summary and conclusions	9
8.0 Acknowledgements	9
9.0 Appendices	
9.1 Colour photographs	
9.2 Post-Roman pottery assessment by J Young	
9.3 Site archive	
9.4 References	

Illustrations

- Fig. 1 1: 10,000 site location
- Fig. 2 Trench location diagram at scale 1:1250
- Fig. 3 South end of west section, Trench 1
- Fig. 4 Plan, east end of Trench 1
- Fig. 5 Plan of Trench 2 (with location of Fig. 6)
- Fig. 6 Sample section, Trench 2
- Fig. 7 Plan of Trench 3 (with location of Fig. 8)
- Fig. 8 Sample section, Trench 3
- Fig. 9 Plan of Trench 4
- Fig. 10 Section through ditch [133] (with location on Fig. 9)

Summary

- * *An archaeological field evaluation took place on land west of Lincoln Road, Skegness, in advance of residential development.*
- * *Four trenches were excavated inside the proposed area of development, with three of these being located to intercept cropmark features and magnetic anomalies.*
- * *Trench 1 contained a shallow feature which may correlate with a geophysical anomaly; Trench 2 contained only natural stratigraphy, as did Trench 3; Trench 4 contained a ditch which was suspected on the basis of a geophysical anomaly*
- * *It is concluded on the basis of work carried out that the site is of relatively limited archaeological potential.*

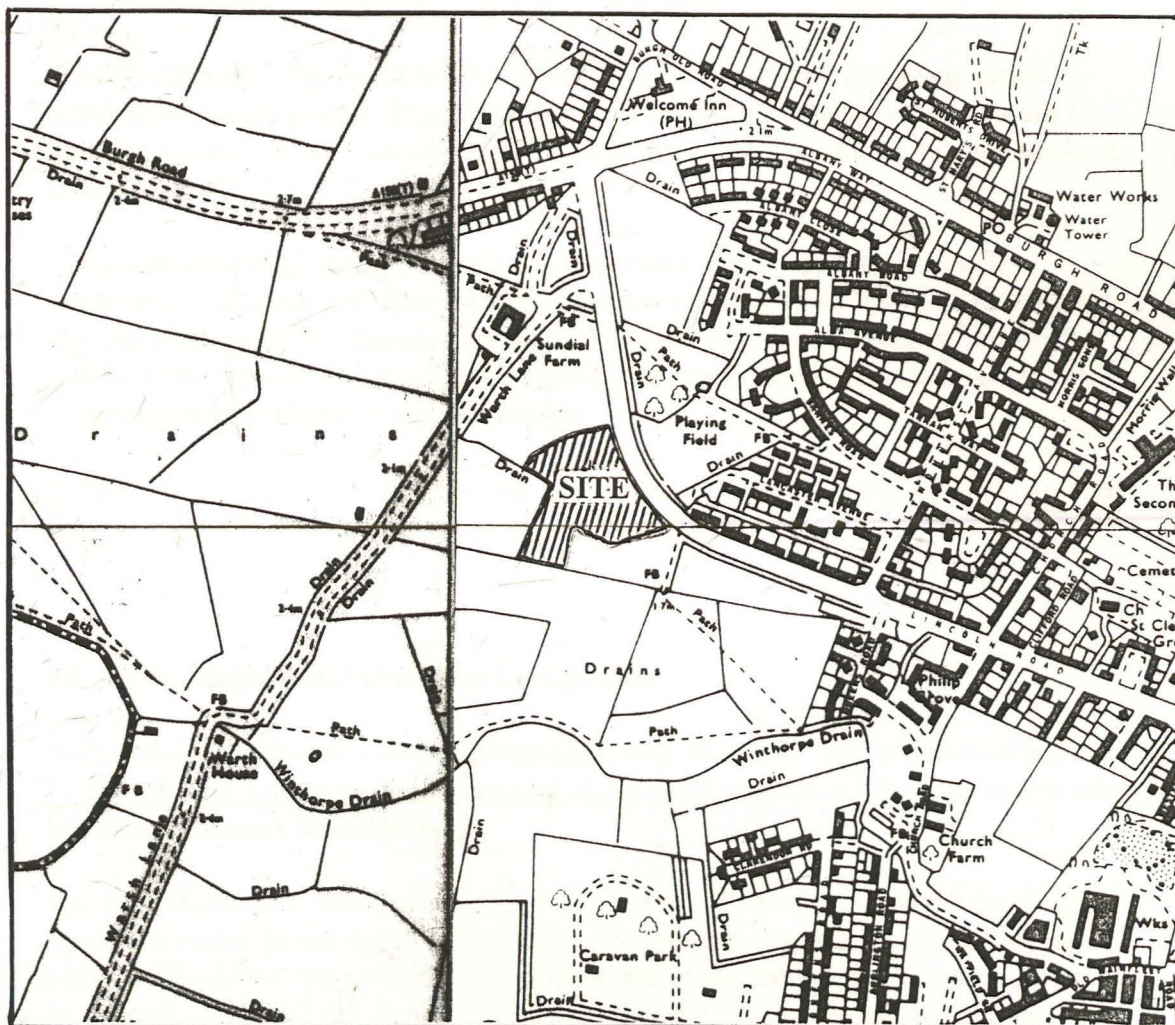


Fig. 1 1:10,000 map section incorporating site location
 (OS copyright reference AL 51521 A0001)

1.0 Introduction

A programme of archaeological trial trenching was carried out over a three day period on the 'Old Donkey Field', adjacent to Lincoln Road on the north-west side of Skegness in East Lincolnshire (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Willmot Dixon Housing Ltd in response to a brief issued by the Assistant County Archaeologist for Lincolnshire.

The results presented in this report will be taken into consideration by the planning authority when assessing the archaeological potential of the site; the potential impact of development; and the requirement or non-requirement of further archaeological intervention in advance of, or during, development.

2.0 Location and description

Skegness is a coastal settlement approximately 4km north of Ingoldmells, 57km east of Lincoln on the seaward side of the Lincolnshire marsh. The proposed development site is on the north-west side of the town, immediately west of Lincoln Road (TF 55155 640470).

The site currently supports a dense blanket of coarse grass and moss vegetation on which donkeys are grazed. Predominantly, the land is flat, although there is a slight topographic rise on the west side of the site. The mean height above modern sea level is approximately 2m.

The geomorphology of this part of the Lincolnshire coast is relatively poorly understood, although it is clear from the location of submerged Neolithic forest beds that the position of the coastline has changed significantly in post-glacial times. The soils over the present site are derived mainly from standing water: marine clays with some coastal sand deposits and silt washes.

Willmott Dixon Housing Ltd. propose to construct residential dwellings and associated access on behalf of De Montford Housing Association.

3.0 Archaeological and historical background

Archaeologically the area around Skegness is well known for salt production in the Prehistoric and Roman periods. Remains of salt workings can still be seen at low tide, particularly around Ingoldmells.

Neolithic stone axes, flint arrowheads, Roman pottery, hand-bricks and briquetage have been found on the beach at various times. Salt-making sites have been located inland at Skegness, but none have been identified along the modern coastline, and investigations carried out during the Lindsey Coastal Survey did not encounter deposits of archaeological importance (Brooks 1990).

The place-name Skegness is first recorded in 1166 as '*Shegenesse*'. It is of Old Norse origin meaning 'Skeggi's headland' (Ekwall 1989, 424). It is, perhaps, significant that it is not recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086, although it is possible that a place referred to as '*tric*', which is not mentioned after this time, was a predecessor of Skegness (Morris 1986, 12,77 notes).

When the antiquarian John Leland visited the town in the sixteenth century, he referred to a walled town and castle which had been lost to the sea (Chandler 1993, 300). It has been speculated that this may have been the remains of a Saxon Shore fort (Whitwell 1992, 52).

The site lies within a broad zone containing physical evidence of medieval cultivation. To the north, west and south are fields containing ridge and furrow cultivation systems, and immediately to the north of the site is an area of enclosure-type features; possibly translating to late medieval tofts (RCHM ref. L1.447.10.1). Similar features have been noted slightly further to the north (RCHM ref. L1.447.10.2). There are other features of this broad date within the same general vicinity, including a moated enclosure at TF 5586 6442 and an earthwork enclosure at TF 5586 6435.

In view of the above, a geophysical survey of the site area was carried out by Geophysical Surveys of Bradford Ltd. (Survey No. 98/04). This resulted in the identification of a number of weak anomalies across the site which appeared to correlate with aerial photographic information held at the County Sites and Monuments Record. Taken together, the information suggesting that these anomalies represented the remains of crofts associated with a farmstead.

4.0 The objectives of field evaluation

In view of the above, the Assistant County Archaeologist issued a project brief requiring that four archaeological trenches should be excavated to determine the potential and significance of any archaeological deposits/remains within the site area. Three of these (Trenches 1, 2 and 4) were sited to intercept anomalies detected during the geophysical survey. Trench 3 was positioned in an otherwise blank area of the site as a control.

The purpose of the intrusive phase of evaluation was to determine whether or not the weak anomalies detected during the geophysical survey actually translated to physical and significant archaeological remains, and to assess whether or not the proposed residential would impact on these remains. This approach is in keeping with the guidance set out in the DOE document *Archaeology and Planning: Planning Policy Guidance Note 16*, 1990.

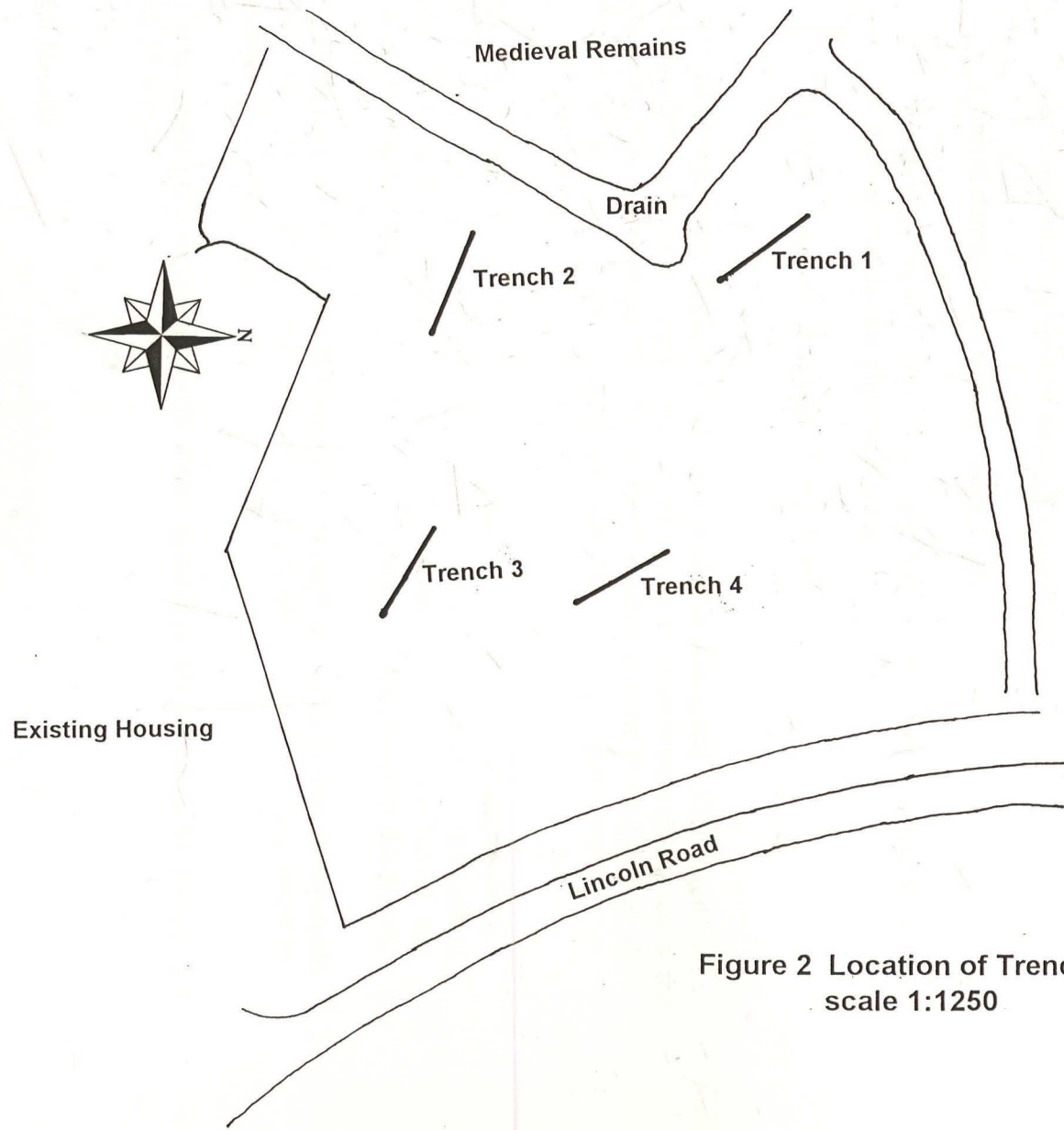


Figure 2 Location of Trenches
scale 1:1250

5.0 Methodology

The four trenches (indicated on Fig. 2) were positioned as follows:

Trench 1: orientated north-west to south-east, north-west corner of site: to intercept linear east-west anomaly

Finished dimensions = approx. 20m x 1.6m

Trench 2: orientated north-west to south-east, south-west side of the site: to intercept localised curved anomaly

Finished dimensions = approx. 20m x 1.6m

Trench 3: orientated north-west to south-east, south side of the site, not associated with any specific anomaly (ie control)

Finished dimensions = approx. 20m x 1.6m

Trench 4: orientated north-west to south-east in north-central area of the site: to intercept regular geophysical anomaly.

Finished dimensions = approx. 20m x 1.6m

The four trenches were marked-out in advance of excavation, and a JCB, fitted with a smooth ditching blade was used to remove all topsoil and overburden (to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon or to 1.2m below modern ground surface. All machine excavation was carried out under archaeological supervision, and all subsequent excavation was by hand.

Written recording was undertaken using standard proforma context record sheets (incorporating physical descriptions, interpretations and stratigraphic relationships). Deposits were drawn to scale (1:20 and 1:50) in both plan and section format, and significant deposits were photographed. Some prints are reproduced in this report.

Artefacts (in this case, medieval pottery) were coded according to their stratigraphic horizons and were subsequently removed from the site for processing and specialist appraisal.

The excavation was supervised by the writer, assisted by Mr D Brown, Mr J Snee, and Mr M Wright.

6.0 Results

6.1 Trench 1 (Fig's 3 and 4; Plate 2)

Trench 1 was excavated to a depth 1.2 m beneath the modern ground surface. The deposit sequence exposed can be summarised as follows:-

(100) Topsoil: a dark humic grey-brown clay-silt which did not appear to have been ploughed.

(101) A silt-clay deposit dipping into a depression at the east end of the trench. This deposit could represent the shallow remains of a wide east-west geophysical anomaly recorded during an earlier survey, although this would mean that the feature reflected by the anomaly is in fact slightly further to the south than anticipated. The deposit does not conform completely to the anticipated pattern, but a cultural rather than natural origin is suggested by a concentrated area of pottery sherds; with each of these appearing to be part of the same vessel. The pottery can be dated only broadly; between the 12th and 16th century. It is Humber-type lead glazed pottery, although almost all of the glazing has now disappeared.

(102) At the west end of the trench, below or cut by (101): laminated bands of alternating fine sand and silt; laid down by water, possibly representing fills within a natural creek.

Figure 3 South end of west section in trench 1

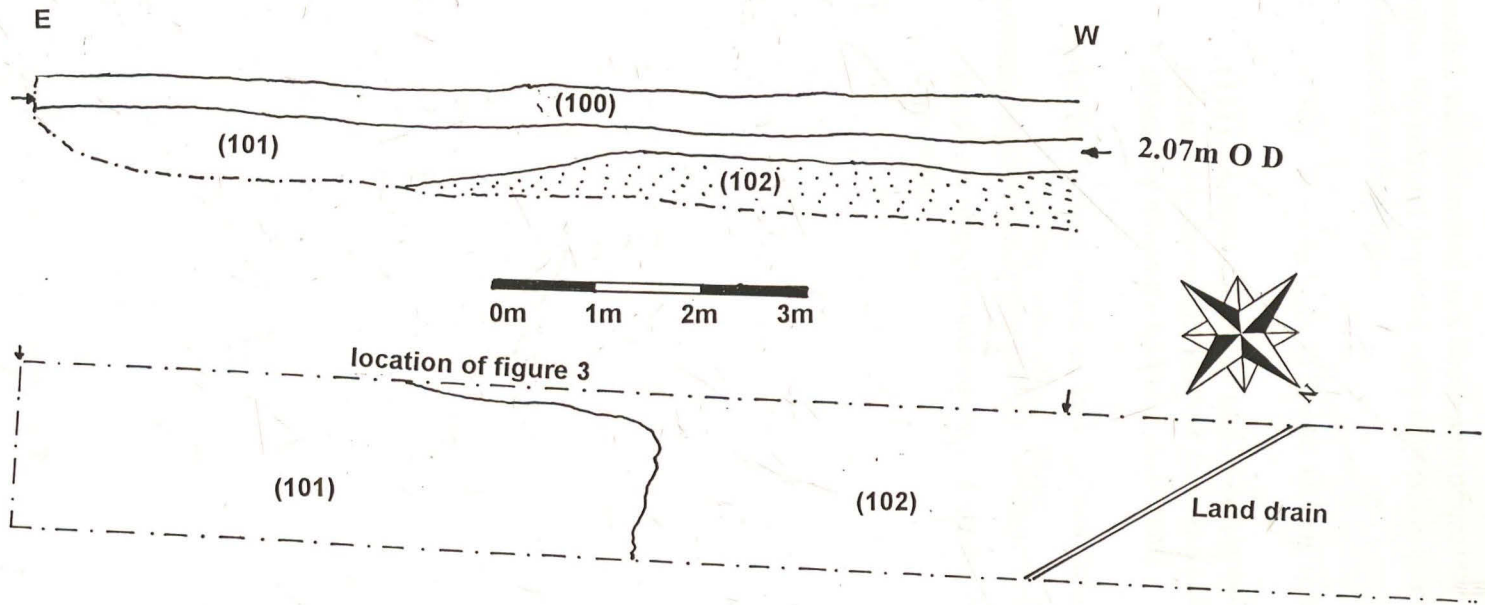


Figure 4 Plan of east end of trench 1

6.2 Trench 2 (Fig's 5 and 6; Plate 3)

Trench 2 was excavated to a depth approximately 1.2m. beneath the modern ground surface. No cultural deposits were exposed in this area. The stratigraphy may be summarised as follows:-

- (110) An even layer of humic silt clay topsoil.
- (111) A level deposit of mid-brown/grey mottled clay 0.25 m deep; presumably derived/reworked from the underlying deposit, (112), but possibly altered by exposure and seasonal drying.
- (112) A relatively thick layer of mottled grey/blue reduced clay; laid down by standing water (0.4m deep).
- (113) A finely laminated wash deposit; the depth of which was not determined.



Figure 5 Plan of trench 2 showing location of figure 6

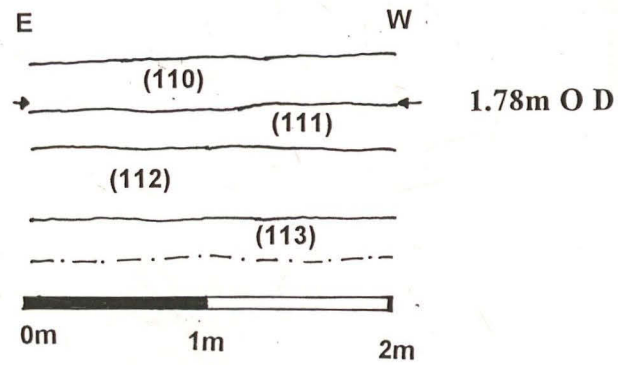
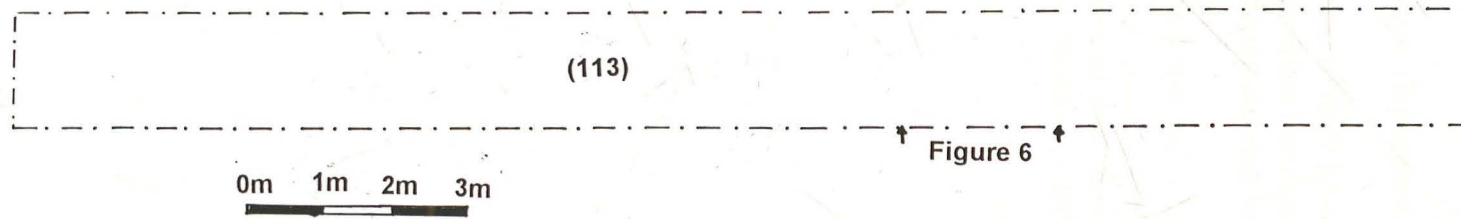


Figure 6 Sample section of trench 2

6.3 Trench 3 (Fig's 7 and 8; Plate 4)

Trench 3 was devoid of archaeological deposits. It was excavated to a depth of 1.2 m, and the deposits exposed can be summarised as follows:-

- (120) Humic clay topsoil, the same as (110). Depth 0.3m.
- (121) Layer of thick brown mottled clay (0.38 m deep); possibly derived/reworked from underlying deposit (122), but affected by exposure/seasonal drying and root action.
- (122) Thick layer of mottled grey brown clay, 0.3m deep.
- (123) Layer of waterlogged reduced clay which has remained wet since its deposition; depth not determined.

Figure 7 Plan of trench 3 showing location of figure 8

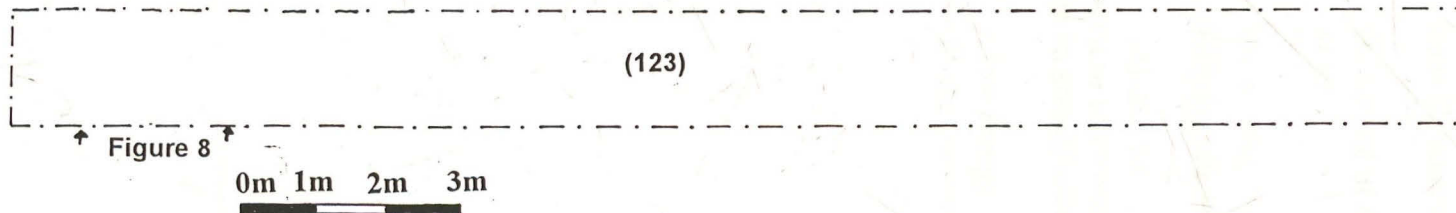
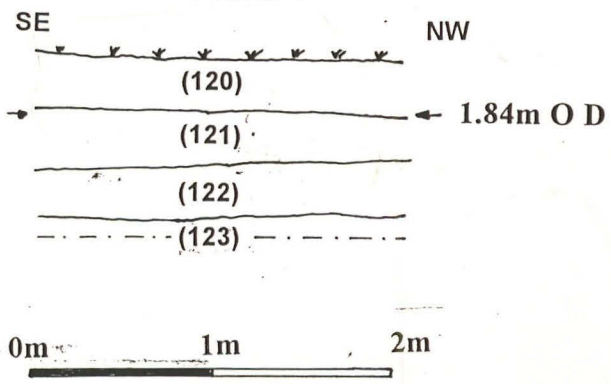


Figure 8 Sample section of trench 3



6.4 Trench 4 (Fig's 9 and 10; Plate 5)

Trench 4 contained the remains of one undated ditch which correlates with an area of amorphous anomalies on the geophysical survey. Deposits are described as follows:-

- (130) Topsoil; same as (110) and (120); 0.42m deep.
- (131) The top fill of ditch [133]; a mottled brown-grey silty clay; deposited by water.
- (132) The primary/lower fill of ditch [133]: high clay content, deposited by slow-moving or standing water.
- [133] A U-shaped ditch cut; 0.6m in depth, 1.6m in width, and orientated north-east to south-west. This feature coincides with the edge of what has been labelled an area of amorphous anomalies on the geophysical survey.
- (134) A low-energy, water-born clay deposit which extended to the base of the trench, and was cut through by ditch [133].

Figure 9 Plan of trench 4

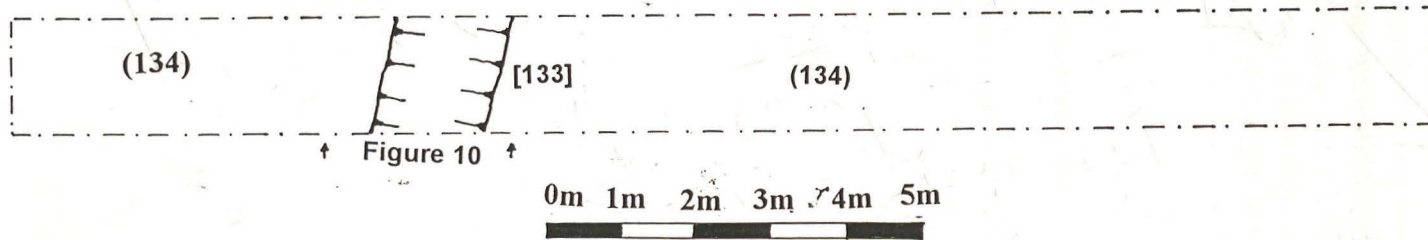
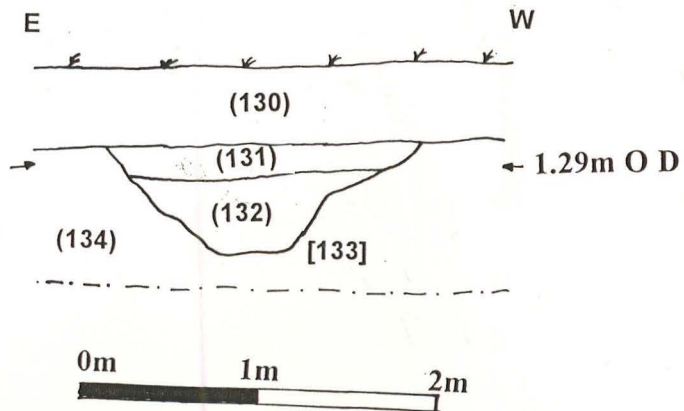


Figure 10 Section of trench 4
through ditch [133]



7.0 Summary and Conclusions

Despite the evidence from aerial photographs and a geophysical survey, the evaluation has not identified any significant archaeological remains. In view of this, it may be concluded that the proposed development will have only a limited impact on the archaeological resource.

The site appears to lie on the periphery of a medieval settlement area, which may have focused on a slight rise which lies to the west of the present site.

In Trench 1, a shallow feature was exposed which could conceivably correlate with an anomaly recorded during the earlier geophysical survey. It contained several sherds of Humber-type ware which can be only broadly dated between the 12th and the 16th century. Trenches 2 and 3 were completely devoid of archaeological remains, even though Trench 2 was sited over a geophysical anomaly. Trench 4 contained one linear ditch: devoid of artefactual remains, but correlating with an anomaly.

8.0 Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks are expressed to Willmott Dixon Housing Ltd for commissioning Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) to undertake this evaluation.

9.0 Appendices

9.1 Colour photographs

9.2 Post-Roman pottery assessment by J Young

9.3 Site archive

9.4 References

9.1 Colour photographs



Plate 1: General shot of site facing south



Plate 2: General shot of trench 1 facing west



Plate 3: Section in trench 2 facing south



Plate 4: Section of trench 3 facing south



Plate 5: Cut [133] in south section of trench 4

Appendix 9.2

Lincoln Road, Skegness: post-Roman pottery assessment by J Young

Sixteen post-Roman pottery sherds were submitted from the above site, all from context 101.

All of the sherds derive from a single vessel of Humber ware type. The internal and external surfaces are oxidised red; the core of the fabric is reduced. Only one sherd contains faint traces of lead glazing. This has been under fired and has resulted in the loss of glaze over most of the vessel surface.

This ware form was produced between the medieval and post-medieval periods, giving a very broad date range: 12th - 16th century.

Appendix 9.3 Site archive

Primary records and artefacts are currently with PCA, although a detailed site archive of the paper and physical element is in preparation. This will be deposited at the City and County Museum, Lincoln within six months following project completion, and may be accessed by citing the global accession number, 117.98. A summary of material contained in the archive is presented as follows:-

- x16 context record sheets
- x 9 composite 1:20 1:50 and 1:1250 site drawings
- x 2 colour print films
- x1 box of artefacts
- x1 copy of interim/developers report
- miscellaneous notes and correspondence.

Following submission, the site archived may be accessed at Lincoln City and County Museum by quoting the global accession number:

9.4 References

Brooks, IP, 1990 The Lindsey Coastal Survey 1989-1990

Dept. of the Environment 1990 *Archaeology and Planning. Planning Policy Guidance Note 16*

Mills A D, 1993 *English Place Names*

Morris J (general ed.)1986 'Lincolnshire' *Domesday Book 31*

Roffe D, 1993 'Markets and Fairs, 1086-1792' in Bennett and Bennett (eds) *An Historical Atlas of Lincolnshire*

Whitwell J B, 1992 *Roman Lincolnshire*