98/5

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION
LAND SOUTH OF HIGH STREET, INGOLDMELLS, LINCOLNSHIRE

Site Code:	HSI98
LCNCC Acc No.	76.98
NGR	TF 55615 68770
Planning Ref.	S/090/0426/95 & S/090/0100/98

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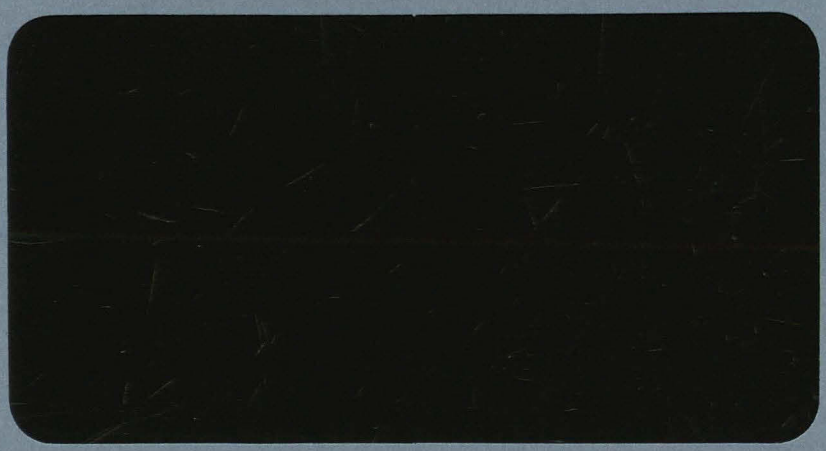

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Report prepared for Mr Venables by
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March1998

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Illustrations

LCNCC ACC NO. 76.98

Summary

* *An archaeological field evaluation took place on land on the west side of Ingoldmells, Lincolnshire, in advance of residential development.*

* *Three trenches were excavated outside the proposed footprints of five dwellings and associated garages.*

* *Trench one contained modern debris and the remains of a boundary (indicated on Figure 1); Trench two produced a small quantity of possible briquetage at a depth exceeding 1.1m; Trench three was devoid of archaeological remains altogether.*

* *It is concluded that the development will cause minimal or no damage to archaeological resources, provided that building depths do not exceed 1m below modern ground level*

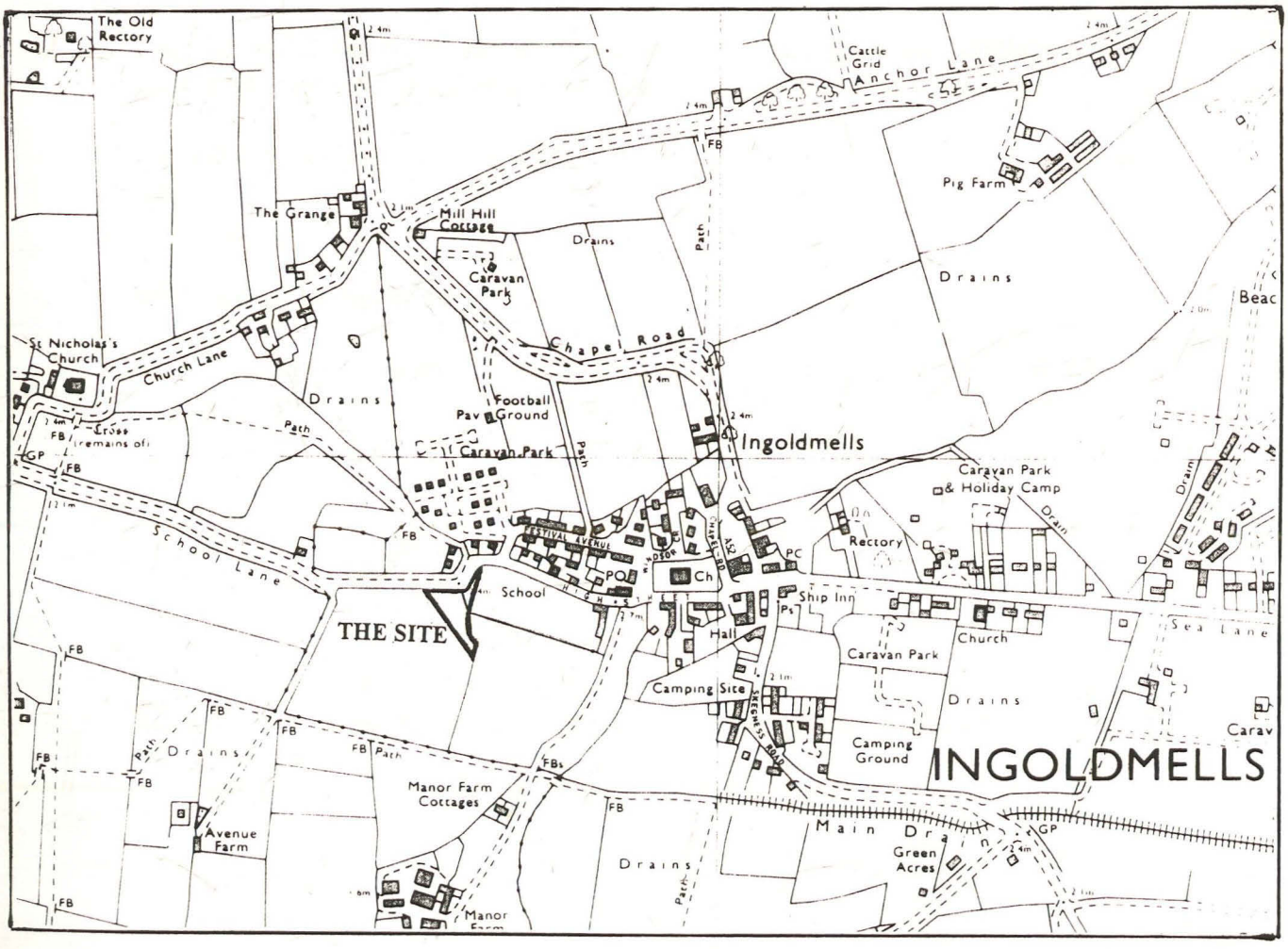


Fig. 1 1:10,000 site location
(OS copyright reference AL 51521 A0001)

1.0 Introduction

A two-day programme of archaeological trial excavation was carried out within a triangular unit of land on the west side of Ingoldmells, Lincolnshire (NGR TF 55615 68770). The work was commissioned by Mr Venables in response to a brief issued by the Assistant County Archaeologist for Lincolnshire.

The results presented in this report will be considered by the planning authority when assessing the overall archaeological significance of the site, as well as the potential impact of the development and the requirement or non-requirement of further archaeological intervention in advance of, or during, development.

2.0 Location and description

Ingoldmells is a coastal settlement approximately 4km north of Skegness on the seaward side of the Lincolnshire marshland. Soils in this location are derived mainly from standing water marine clays, with some coastal sand deposits.

The proposed development site is covered by dense weed, grass and hawthorn vegetation; over which isolated areas of domestic rubbish has been deposited.

The site is predominantly level, with the modern ground surface lying at approximately 1.5m OD.

3.0 Planning background

An outline planning application was submitted to East Lindsey District Council for residential development in 1995; to erect three dwellings and associated garages (planning reference S/090/0426/95). The application was later amended to five dwellings.

Planning permission was granted subject to conditions, one of which required the undertaking of an appropriate programme of archaeological work in advance of development, followed by an appropriate mitigation scheme (if required).

The present application is for the approval of reserved matters relating to the original outline consent; with the evaluation requiring completion prior to the determination of the application.

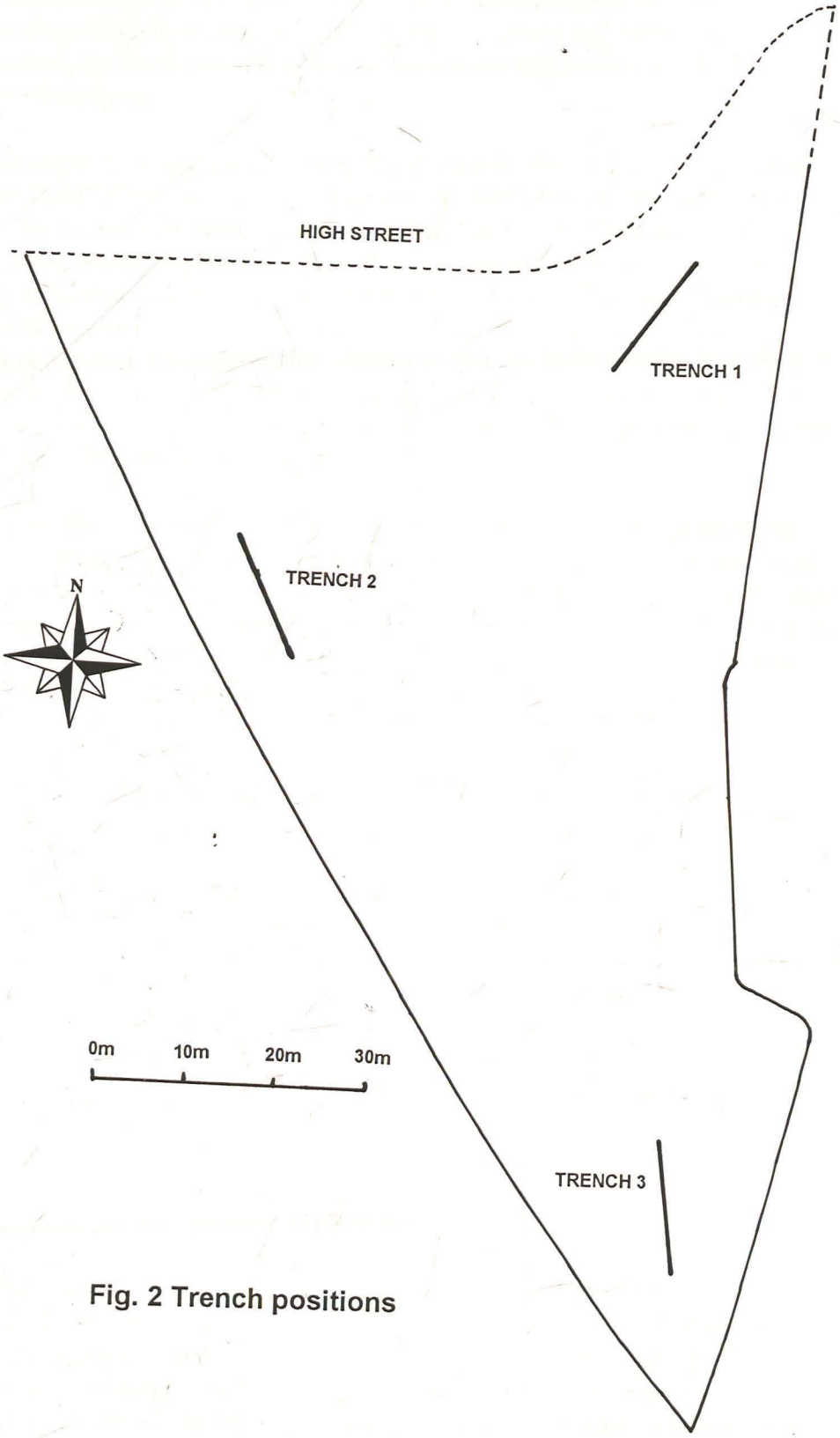


Fig. 2 Trench positions

4.0 Archaeological background

The area surrounding Ingoldmells is well known to archaeologists for its salt production sites which date predominantly to the prehistoric and Romano-British periods. Indeed, the burnt remains of salt workings can still be seen at low tide on some parts of the coast.

The first attempts to record a salt making site at Ingoldmells took place in 1904 when S Maudson Grant observed and excavated two circular kiln-type structures on the foreshore. Two other sites were excavated in the area: in the 1930's and 1950's by Swinnerton and Baker respectively. Since this time, considerably more evidence has come to light further in land - one site entered on the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) centres on TF55600 68800 - an early Iron Age saltern, described in 1964 by B.H.Seaman. The information relating to this site indicates that it produced briquetage (ie clay-based salt making equipment such as evaporation troughs, pedestals and shallow vessels). The grid reference entered at the SMR suggests that the current site is located in the same area as this discovery.

Understanding these sites is difficult: a situation made more complex by an, as yet, unsatisfactory state of knowledge regarding the physical evolution of the east coast. Areas that are now submerged were dry land during the Neolithic or New Stone Age period (when quantities of sea water were still retained as ice following the retreat of the great ice sheets, some 10, 000 years ago). This means that some sites lie beyond the present foreshore, whereas others are found inland, beneath thick layers of clay and alluvium.

A short distance south of the present site, many salt making sites have been discovered as a result of modern drainage schemes.

Salt making in history and prehistory formed an important part of the economy. With no direct refrigeration facilities, salting was the main way of preserving meat and other foodstuffs. During the Roman period, for example, soldiers were often paid in salt (giving rise to the modern term salary).

From the density of find spots recorded at the SMR, it is clear that this part of the Lincolnshire marsh was widely utilised for the procurement and production of coastal salt.

5.0 The requirements of the field evaluation

The Assistant County Archaeologist issued a project brief requiring that three archaeological trenches (representing just under 1% of the site) should be excavated to determine the character, date, depth, state of preservation; extent and significance of any archaeological deposits within the site. The overall objective of the project, therefore, was to present the District Planning Authority with a set of data from which reasoned decisions may be taken regarding future management of the archaeological resource and the granting (or refusal) of planning permission on archaeological grounds (ie in line with the Local Plan for East Lindsey and the Dept. of the

Environment document *Archaeology and Planning: Planning Policy Guidance Note16*, 1990).

6.0 Methodology

The three trenches (indicated on Fig. 2) were sited as follows:

Trench 1: orientated north-east to south-west within the north east corner of the site.

Finished dimensions = approx. 14m x 1.6m

Trench 2: orientated north-west to south-east on the west side of the site.

Finished dimensions = approx. 15m x 1.6m

Trench 3: orientated north-west to south-east in the south part of the site

Finished dimensions = approx. 15m x 1.6m

The trenches were marked-out in advance of excavation by the client, 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 a depth in excess of 1m beneath modern ground level. This was a gradual process involving excavation in spits under archaeological supervision. All subsequent excavation was by hand.

Recording was undertaken using standard proforma context record sheets (incorporating physical descriptions, interpretations and stratigraphic relationships). All deposits were drawn to scale (1:20 or 1:50) in both plan and section formats. Comprehensive photographic recording was undertaken and some prints are reproduced in this report.

Artefacts (on this occasion, restricted to a small assemblage of fired clay) were coded according to their stratigraphic contexts and were subsequently removed from the site for processing (washing and marking) and specialist appraisal.

Excavation was carried by the writer, Miss R Gardener, Mr W Livesey, and Mr S Savage.

7.0 Results

7.1 Trench 1 (Fig. 3 and 4)

Trench 1 was excavated to a depth of 1.2 m. (ie beneath modern ground level). The basic deposit sequence exposed may be summarised as follows:-

(100) Topsoil; a dark humic grey clay sealing two large pits, [103] and [105]

[103] This feature, which was entirely machine-excavated, measured some 6.1m on its north-east to south-east axis and was exposed in both section faces. Its depth was approximately 45cm. It contained only modern china and other debris.

[105] This was a linear feature, orientated broadly north-south at the south-east end of the trench. It also was sealed by the topsoil and measured c. 55cm in depth, 1.5m in width. It was filled with mid-grey-brown plastic clay; completely devoid of artefactual remains.

(101) The above pits were cut through a thick deposit (up to 1m) of mottled clay. This appeared to be redeposited natural, which may have been dumped on the site during residential development immediately to the east. It sealed an earlier ditch, [110].

[110] Linear ditch-like feature orientated north-west to south-east. The width of the ditch was 1.6m, and its depth was in excess of 35cm (ie beneath the base of the trench cut. It was filled with blue/grey silty clay, devoid of datable artefacts. However, the location of this feature correlates with the position of an extinct field boundary, the location of which can be seen on Fig. 1.

(111) A natural marine clay deposit cut by ditch (110).

Fig. 3 Plan of Trench 1

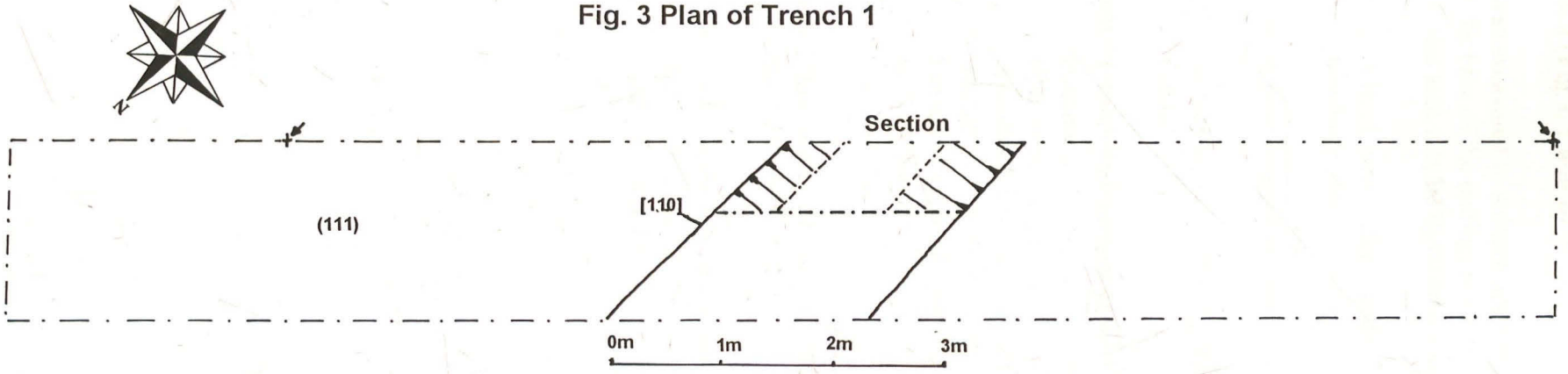
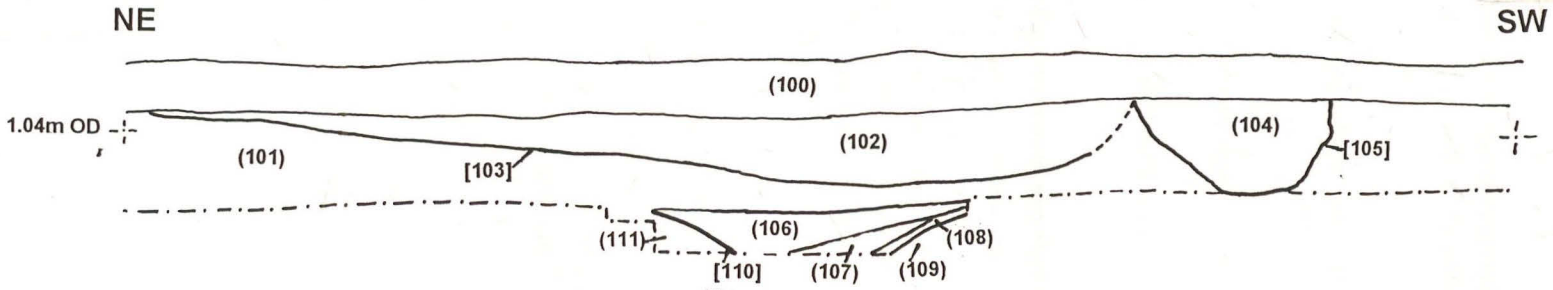


Fig. 4 North/west facing section of Trench 1



7.2 Trench 2 (Fig's. 5 and 6)

Trench 2 was excavated to a depth approximately 1 m. beneath the modern ground surface. In the base of the cutting, some cultural remains were exposed. The sequence examined in this area may be summarised as follows:-

(200) A thick humic clay topsoil, 0.4 m deep, supporting grass, reeds and hawthorn scrub.

(201) A level layer of mid-brown grey mottled clay, 0.28 m deep.

(202) A thick layer (30cm) of grey/blue reduced clay; ?standing water deposit

(203) 1.1 m below present ground level; 0.21 m of grey-brown mottled clay containing frequent decalcified cockle shells, charcoal flecks and occasional fragments of fired clay. This was interpreted on site as briquetage, but the report by Cowgill at the end of this text is less conclusive. However, given that salt making is a principal activity in this area during late prehistoric and Roman0-British times, it is not unlikely that the finds do in fact indicate the close proximity of a salt working area.

(204) This deposit was very similar to (203), with the exception that cockle shells were absent.

(205) This was the lowest deposit in the sequence, and was examined only in the base of a small sondage which was excavated to assess the depth of (203). It consisted of firm light blue/grey clay.

Fig. 5 Plan of trench 2

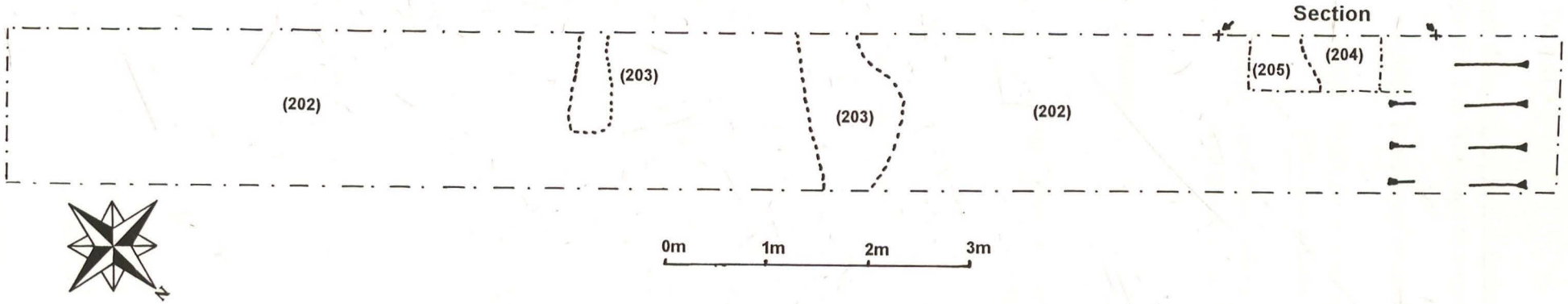
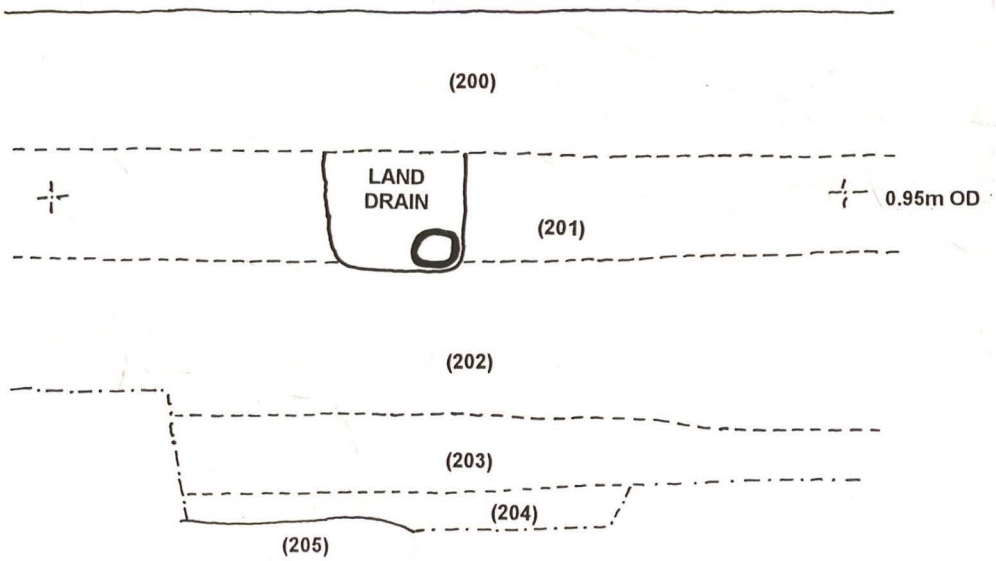


Fig. 6 North end of west section Trench 2
Scale 1:20



7.3 Trench 3 (Fig. 7)

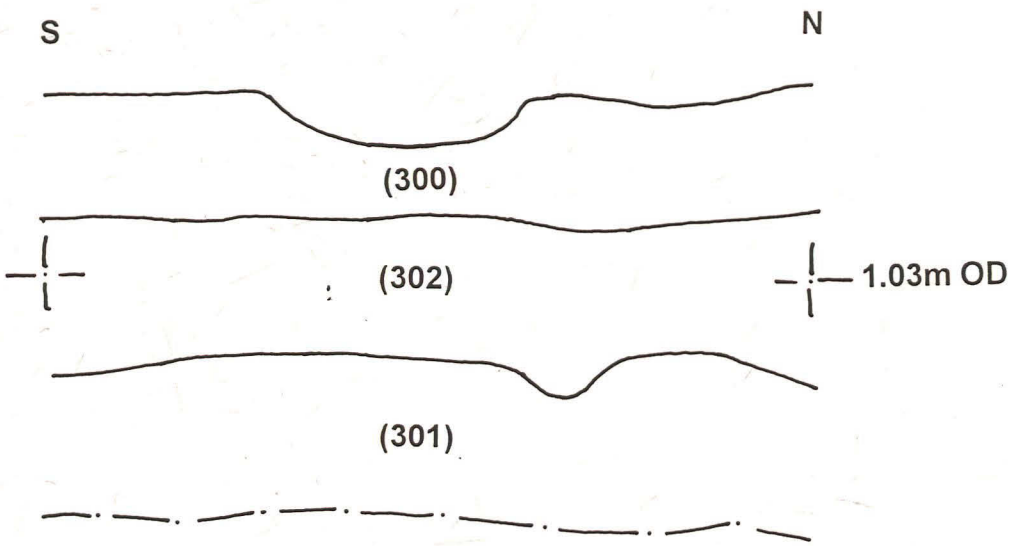
Trench three was devoid of archaeological features altogether and was excavated to a depth of 1.1 m. The deposit sequence was as follows:-

(300) Level layer of humic clay topsoil (the same as (200))

(302) Thick level layer of brown mottled clay (0.38 m deep) ?derived from (301), but affected by seasonal drying and root action.

(301) Level layer of thick grey brown clay which extended vertically to the base of the excavation.

Fig. 7 Sample of west section Trench 3
Scale 1:20



8.0 Summary and Conclusions

The evaluation has not identified any significant archaeological remains that would be threatened by the proposed development scheme (provided, that is, that construction depths are minimised to within 1m of the modern ground surface).

The site is on the periphery of the medieval settlement, which probably developed over salt working areas.

Traces of potential (and undated) salt-making activity have been recorded, although the remains encountered have been too peripheral to allow adequate quantification.

9.0 Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks are expressed to Mr Venables for commissioning P.C.A. (Lincoln) to undertake this site evaluation.

10.0 Appendices

10.1 Colour photographs

10.2 Site archive

10.3 References

10.4 Report on the clay finds by J Cowgill

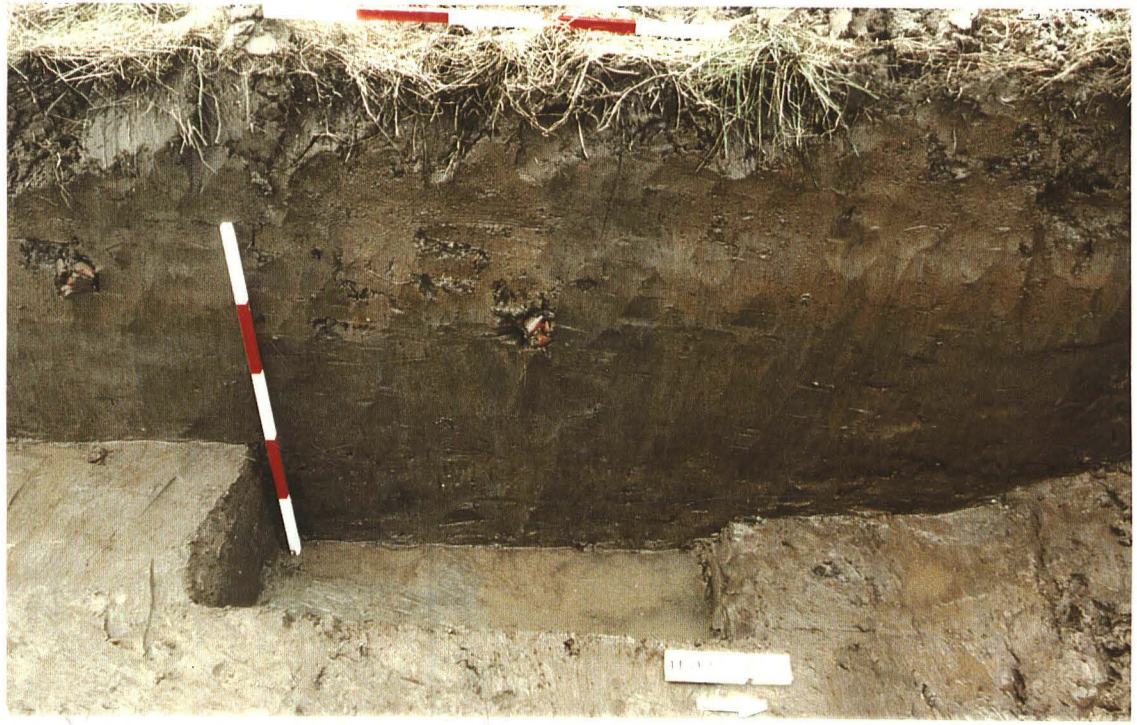
Appendix 1 Colour prints

P1. General view of site (background), looking south-east

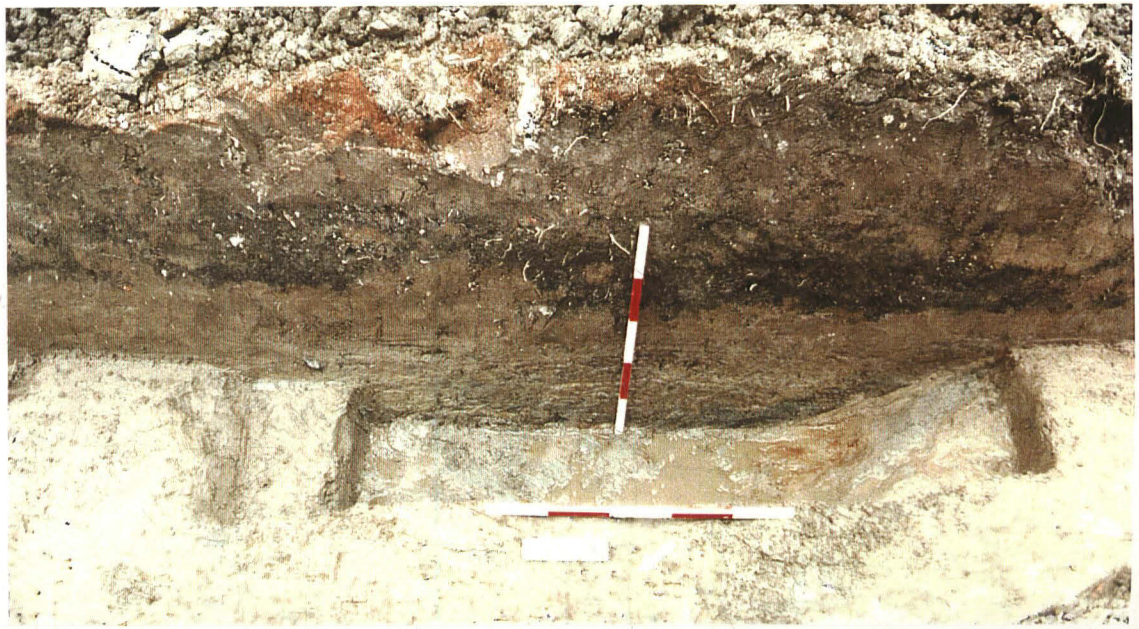
P2. Trench 1 following cleaning, looking south-west

P3. Trench 2 following cleaning, looking south-south-east

P4. Trench 3 following cleaning, looking south



P5. Sondage in base of Trench 2, looking west



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Appendix 10.2 Site archive

Primary records and finds are currently with PCA. 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. A summary of material contained in the archive is presented as follows:-

x21 context record sheets

x 2 composite 1:20 site drawings

x 1 colour print films

x1 bag of artefacts

interim/developer report

miscellaneous notes and correspondence.

Following submission, the site archived may be examined at Lincoln City and County Museum by quoting the global accession number: 76.98.

10.3 References

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REPORT ON THE CLAY FINDS FROM THE HIGH STREET, INGOLDMELLS EVALUATION (HSI98)

By Jane Cowgill
March 1998

A small group of fourteen pieces (44g) of baked or fired clay were submitted for cataloguing on the suspicion that they may represent fragments of briquetage. All the clays were silty with no obvious added temper and all had been fired in an oxidising environment. One piece had the pinkish-purple coloration associated with salt working but this can also occur when clays with a salt component are heated. Any clays in the vicinity would inevitably contain salt. The largest piece of daub-like material has one curved surface similar to those found on briquetage supports but similar curves often occur on structural daub. The remainder of the assemblage probably represented two thin spalls of clay that had flaked of an artefact or structure. The limited evidence present cannot suggest the presence of salt working and do not add any information to the archaeological record. The pieces have been discarded.

Catalogue

Context 203: Fired clay: 6g. A single piece of oxidised fired clay with partial pink-purple coloration.

Context 203: Fired clay: 15g. Briquetage support??

Context 203: Fired clay: 13g. Thirteen pieces of lightly fired or baked clay that are all probably fragments of the same clay spall. Maximum thickness 6mm.

Context 203: Fired clay: 10g. A single lightly fired or baked spall of clay. Maximum thickness 4mm.