

— CITY OF —
◇ LINCOLN ARCHAEOLOGY ◇
— U N I T —

98/7
RASEN LANE/BAILGATE,
LINCOLN -
Traffic Calming Scheme

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

By K Wragg

CLAU ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT NO: 329

Lincolnshire County Council
Archaeology Section

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ELI 530

SLI 5107 1468

70018 - Roman

70188 - Med

A
Report to
City Engineering Consultants,
Lincoln City Council

February 1998

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RASEN LANE/ BAILGATE, LINCOLN - TRAFFIC CALMING SCHEME

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This scheme involved the installation of traffic calming measures in various locations along Rasen Lane and Bailgate, Lincoln. The works involved remodelling of the existing kerb alignments, provision of new ramped areas, repaving/surfacing and limited provision of new surface water drainage arrangements.

In view of the archaeological importance of this area of the City, it was decided that the groundworks should be monitored archaeologically.

As a result, the City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit was commissioned by City Engineering Consultants, Lincoln City Council, to carry out an intermittent watching brief on the site. Observation was carried out between the 18th of March and the 24th of April 1997, and the findings from this watching brief have further illustrated that important buried archaeological remains exist in this part of the City.

While archaeological remains were present in the deeper ground disturbances, the general lack of datable objects recovered during the recording meant that the chronological sequence could not be clearly established.

Notwithstanding this, however, it may be possible to attempt to place some of the discoveries within a broad chronological sequence, on the basis of the depths at which the discoveries were made, together with the evidence from other archaeological sites nearby.

Accordingly it would seem likely that the possible paving slabs revealed towards the base of the trench were associated with either the Roman road itself.

At the other side of the trench the sequence of possible metalled limestone and mortar surfaces could indicate the presence of a later road, which from its relative depth compared to the paving could most likely be medieval in origin.

Aside from this, however, it would be virtually impossible to make further determination regarding the likely age of individual deposits, without additional investigation. Provision should therefore be made to allow more detailed archaeological recording, should further work be proposed for this area.

RASEN LANE/ BAILGATE, LINCOLN - TRAFFIC CALMING SCHEME

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This scheme involved the installation of traffic calming measures in various locations along Rasen Lane and Bailgate, Lincoln (see Figs.1, 2 & 3).

The proposed works along Bailgate related to the remodelling of the existing kerb alignments, provision of two new ramped areas (adjacent to nos.40 & 42 Bailgate, and at the junction with Westgate), repaving/surfacing, and limited provision of new surface water drainage arrangements. The improvements along Rasen Lane were limited to realignment of various kerbs, and the provision of several raised areas in each carriageway, and did not involve any substantial groundworks.

In view of the archaeological importance of this area of the City, it was decided that the groundworks should be monitored archaeologically.

As a result, the City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit was commissioned by City Engineering Consultants, Lincoln City Council, to carry out an intermittent watching brief on the site. Observation was carried out between the 18th of March and the 24th of April 1997.

The information in this document is presented with the proviso that further data may yet emerge. The Unit, its members and employees cannot, therefore, be held responsible for any loss, delay or damage, material or otherwise, arising out of this report. The document has been prepared in accordance with the terms of the Unit's Articles of Association, the Code of Conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists, and *The Management of*

Archaeological Projects 2 (English Heritage, 1991).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Historical Evidence

The uphill area of Lincoln was probably the first part of the city to be colonised by the Romans, as their military base during the *Legionary Fortress* period, (c.AD50-c.80). Later this became the administrative centre during the *Colonia* period (c.AD80-c.450). Since examples of both are rare in Britain, remains of the Roman period are of vital importance.

Evidence for the remains of the *colonia Forum* has been recorded in various excavations in this area and physical signs of its presence can still be seen. Columns, probably forming the colonnade on the east side of the Forum, are still present in the basements of properties in Bailgate, and a large section of standing Roman wall (the "Mint Wall") is present to the north of the Castle Hotel. Positions of further columns are indicated by stone markers in the modern road surface. Excavations on all sides have established the line of the wall and defensive ditches of the fortress and Colonia. The public baths lay between James Street and Bailgate, and there is the likelihood of other public buildings in the vicinity of the site.

Abandonment of the Roman City seems to have started in the late 4th Century with town life reduced to a small community between the 5th to late 9th centuries. Following the Viking take-over of Lindsey in 874, Lincoln became a centre for a Viking army and, subsequently, a Viking town. Evidence for increasing urbanisation in the 10th and 11th centuries has emerged from all parts of the former Roman city with Lincoln forming one, and perhaps the most important, of the so-called Five Boroughs of the present East Midlands. This upper city area does not, however, appear to have been intensively reoccupied before the late 10th century or later.

Place names and personal names indicate a broad mix of Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian occupation. The term "gate" (eg Bailgate) is derived from the Scandinavian "gata" meaning street, suggesting that some of the streets of

today were established during this period. Except for the north part of Bailgate most Roman streets were no longer used with the result that many Roman buildings now lie under the present street system.

Work on the site of the forum indicates that an early Christian Church stood here, perhaps from as early as the 5th century, and Christian use of the site continued. Any remains of this period are again fundamental to our understanding.

2.2 Archaeological Evidence

Although several archaeological projects have been carried out in the uphill part of the city, one is especially relevant to the current redevelopment: observations made during the laying of new watermains along Bailgate in 1993.

The first remains encountered along the section of trench in Bailgate occurred immediately north of the Assembly Rooms, and consisted of what appeared to be three column bases, oriented N-S along the eastern side of the street. Workmen also noted a stone concentration to the north of this feature, which they interpreted as a wall. Finally, opposite no.73 Bailgate, trenching uncovered a stone column, lying horizontally E-W across the trench. While the last of these may represent one of the columns of the Forum frontage having collapsed eastwards, the other structures probably relate to a public building on the east side of the principal Roman street.

To the north, adjacent to the Bailgate Methodist Church (almost directly opposite the site under consideration), a further length of wall was recorded, oriented N-S, while at the junction of Bailgate and East Bight an additional group of features was unearthed. This latter group comprised an area of metalled surface, revealed at a depth of approximately 1.2m below the existing road surface, bounded to the east by rough paving, together with two sections of possible wall. In view of the location and orientation of these features, it seems likely that they represent the line of the medieval successor to the Roman Street passing through Newport Arch, together with remains of structures fronting on to this street from the east. Unfortunately as dating evidence was not recovered, the origins of the structures could not be determined.

The main interest of the works therefore was in the possibility of further Roman and Saxon structures, and evidence for the nature of the Roman and later streets.

3.0 RESULTS

Of the two areas affected by this scheme, the improvements along Rasen Lane did not involve any substantial groundworks, with all excavation and construction being confined within the upper levels of the modern carriageway. In consequence, it was decided to limit the archaeological watching brief to those works undertaken along Bailgate.

In the main these works also involved excavation and construction that was largely contained within the modern road layers, of insufficient depth to reveal any buried archaeological deposits. However, in a one particular location it was necessary to provide a connection to the existing foul water sewer, to allow drainage of surface water, and required groundworks ultimately reached depths of 2.3m (see Figs.4 & 5).

The trench itself measured approximately 2m square, and was situated on the western side of the carriageway, close to no.40 Bailgate. Unfortunately, in order to provide safe working conditions at this depth, shoring was installed in the form of 'open-boarded' steel trench sheeting. This had the result that the majority of the trench sections were obscured, and space was severely restricted rendering detailed investigation and photography almost impossible.

The trench sections were, however, successfully investigated in two isolated positions (through gaps between the trench sheets), but there was no opportunity to establish links between the layers represented in the two markedly different sequences. In addition, virtually no dating evidence was forthcoming from the deposits, and it is consequently impossible to place the deposits within their historic context (although by comparison with other discoveries in the surrounding area, it may be possible to offer some idea of the sequence of the occupation, see 4.0, below).

The two sections recorded were situated at the south-east, and the north-west corners of the trench respectively (i.e., diagonally opposed), and are illustrated on Figs.4 & 5. The stratigraphic sequence revealed in each section was as follows:

3.1 West-facing section (Fig.4)

The earliest feature revealed in this part of the trench comprised at least two large (c.400mm square) flat limestone slabs [125], appearing to form part of a paved surface. This feature was only revealed at the limit of excavation (L.O.E.) of the trench, and therefore no indication of the thickness of the surface could be seen. Similarly the precise alignment and extent of the feature is not known, and no dating evidence was found during excavation. However, given the depth at which the surface appeared (the upper boundary was present c.2.2m below the present road surface), it seems very likely that the surface is associated with either the Roman road, or roadside pavement. As such, this constitutes the first definite evidence that, at one period at least, the main N-S street of the Roman city was formed of paving slabs.

Overlying the slabs was a layer of friable light brown sandy, slightly clayey, silt ([124]), which contained occasional limestone pieces. This deposit was approximately 200mm thick, and was itself sealed by [123], a thin (i.e., c.75mm) layer of mid grey-brown clayey silt and yellow-brown lime mortar.

Layer [123] lay beneath a series of three layers of mid-light grey-brown sandy silt ([120]; [121]; & [120]), which were a total of 600mm thick. Each of the three deposits was virtually identical, differing only in the ratio of the clay content and small limestone inclusions.

The upper deposit of this group, [120], was then sealed by [119], a mid grey clayey silt containing occasional medium sized limestone pieces, and [118], a friable light grey-brown sandy silt containing only frequent small charcoal flecks.

[118] was then itself overlain by [117], a mixed layer of limestone pieces, yellow-brown lime mortar, and mid brown sandy, clayey silt.

The original extent of [117] could not be established, owing to truncation by a modern service trench [116] (this cut feature was approximately 500mm deep and was part of the surface water drainage required by this project). [116], and its associated fill [115] (comprising limestone pieces, tarmac fragments, mid brown silt, and a 150mm plastic drain-pipe), were then sealed by the limestone hardcore bedding, [102], and the

tarmac surface, [101], of the existing carriageway.

3.1 East-facing section (Fig.5)

The earliest deposit revealed in this section was only partially visible at L.O.E. (at c.1.9m below the existing carriageway surface) and comprised a layer of iron-stained lime mortar and small limestone pieces [114].

This deposit was subsequently sealed by a layer of white lime mortar and irregularly shaped limestone pieces, [113], which was in turn overlain by [112], a 50mm-75mm thick spread of mottled mid grey/yellow-brown lime mortar with no inclusions.

Above this, a 200mm thick iron-stained mortar, pebble and limestone deposit was recorded. It is possible that this deposit, [111], was formed of multiple thin layers, representing a number of individual surfaces, but no definite divisions could be identified to confirm this.

[111] was itself overlain by a series of four possible mortar and limestone surfaces ([107]-[110]), each between 100mm and 150mm in thickness. The surfaces comprised medium sized limestone pieces, bonded with a yellow-brown sandy lime mortar, with the upper boundary present at c.1m below the present carriageway level. Although no dating was recovered, the surfaces possibly represent the remains of a medieval road (which had been resurfaced/repared a number of times).

This group of contexts was then sealed by two further layers, [105] and [106], each comprising a moderate-well compacted mid brown-grey sandy, clayey silt containing occasional medium sized limestone pieces.

The uppermost of these two deposits, [105], was then overlain by [104], a similar deposit containing considerably more limestone inclusions. This latter layer was then itself sealed by [103], a well compacted layer of small limestone pieces and lime mortar, which also included occasional small pieces of brick or tile.

The final layers recorded in this section comprised the limestone hardcore and modern tarmac surface ([102] and [101], respectively) forming the present carriageway.

4.0 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

The results from this watching brief serve to further illustrate that important buried archaeological remains exist in this part of the City (from at least 500mm below the modern surface). However, while it is obvious that the remains are present, it is often not possible to definitely establish the chronology of the discoveries. Owing to the general lack of dateable objects recovered during the recording, this is unfortunately the case in this particular instance.

Notwithstanding this however, it may be possible to attempt to place some of the discoveries within a broad chronological sequence, on the basis of the depths at which the discoveries were made, together with the evidence from other archaeological sites nearby.

In this way, it would seem likely that the possible paving slabs [125] revealed towards the base of the trench were associated with either the Roman road itself, or perhaps with a roadside pavement.

At the other side of the trench the sequence of possible metalled limestone and mortar surfaces ([107] - [110]) could indicate the presence of a later road (which from its relative depth compared to the paving [125], could most likely be medieval in origin).

Aside from this however, it would be virtually impossible to make further determination regarding the likely age of individual deposits, without additional investigation. Provision should therefore be made to allow more detailed archaeological recording, should further work be proposed for this area.

5.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit would like to thank the following for their assistance during this project: Mr Ian George, Lincoln City Council Archaeology Officer, Lincoln City Council, City Hall, Beaumont Fee, Lincoln LN1 1DH; Mr A. Winfield, City Engineering Consultants, Lincoln City Council; Messrs. S. Killen & A. Sawyer, and the on-site staff of Eastern Counties Construction Ltd.

6.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Wragg K P 1993 *Bailgate Area Watermains Replacement* CLAU Archaeological Report 46, City of Lincoln Archaeological Unit

Wragg K P 1996 *Duke William Hotel, Bailgate, Lincoln* CLAU Archaeological Report 247, City of Lincoln Archaeological Unit

7.0 LHA NOTE/ARCHIVE DETAILS

7.1 LHA NOTE DETAILS

CLAU CODE: RLB97

PLANNING APPLICATION NO.: N/A

FIELD OFFICER: K. Wragg

NGR: SK 9765/7195

CIVIL PARISH: Lincoln

SMR No.: N/A

DATE OF INTERVENTION: 18/03/97 - 24/04/97

TYPE OF INTERVENTION: Watching Brief

UNDERTAKEN FOR: City Engineering Consultants, City Engineer and Surveyors Department, Lincoln City Council, City Hall, Beaumont Fee, Lincoln, LN1 1DH.

7.2 ARCHIVE DETAILS

PRESENT LOCATION: City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit, Charlotte House, The Lawn, Union Road, Lincoln, LN1 3BL.

FINAL LOCATION: The City and County Museum, Friars Lane, Lincoln.

MUSEUM ACCESSION No.: 54.97

ACCESSION DATE: -

APPENDIX A - ARCHIVE DEPOSITION

The archive consists of:

No.	Description
1	Site diary
1	Report
26	Context records
5	Plan & Section drawings
1 set	Colour slides

The primary archive material, as detailed above, is currently held by :

**The City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit,
Charlotte House,
The Lawn,
Union Road,
Lincoln,
Lincolnshire,
LN1 3BL.**

It is intended that transfer to the City and County Museum, Friars Lane, Lincoln, in accordance with current published requirements, under Museum Accession Number 54.97, will be undertaken following completion of this project.

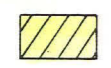
**APPENDIX B - COLOUR
PLATE**



Plate 1: Overhead view of paving slabs in base of trench

CITY OF LINCOLN ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT		
SITE CODE: RLB97	PLANE/ELEV/SECTION NO:	
CLIENT: City Engineering Consultants, Lincoln City Council		
DESCRIPTION: Site Location Plan		
SCALE:	ARCHIVE NO:	
DRAWN BY:	CHECKED:	DATE:
MUSEUM ACCESSION NO: 54.97		

KEY



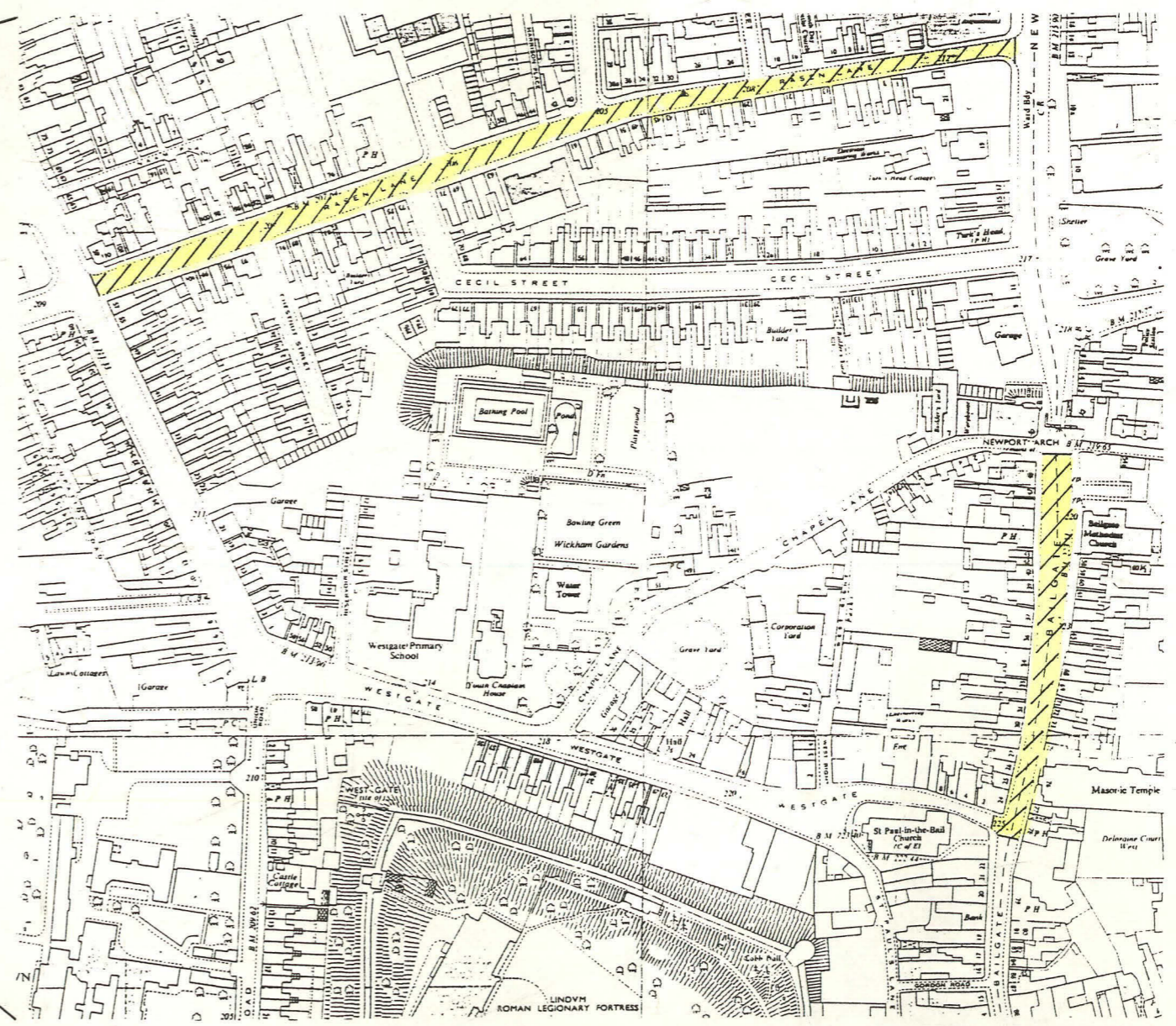
Location of Site



1:10 000



1:2500





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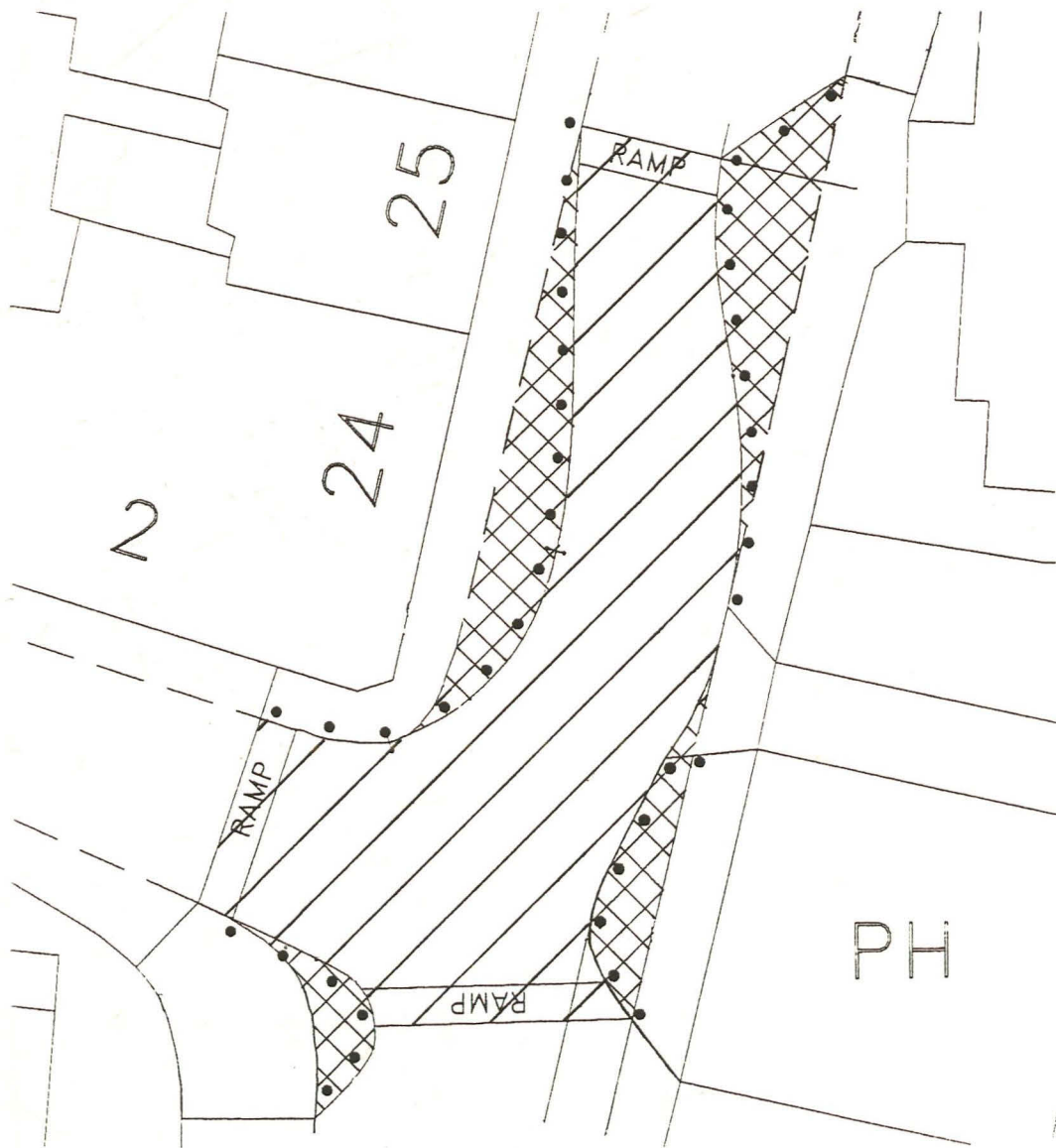
Based upon the 1967 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown copyright.



CITY OF LINCOLN ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT		
SITE CODE: RLB97	PLAN/ELEV/SECTION NO:	
CLIENT: City Engineering Consultants, Lincoln City Council		
DESCRIPTION: Plan of Proposed Works at Junction of Bailgate and Westgate		
SCALE: 1:200	ARCHIVE NO:	
DRAWN BY:	CHECKED:	DATE:
MUSEUM ACCESSION NO: 54.97		

KEY

- — Original Street Alignment
- • New Bollards
-  Raised Paved Area With Ramps
-  New Kerbs and Footway Extensions





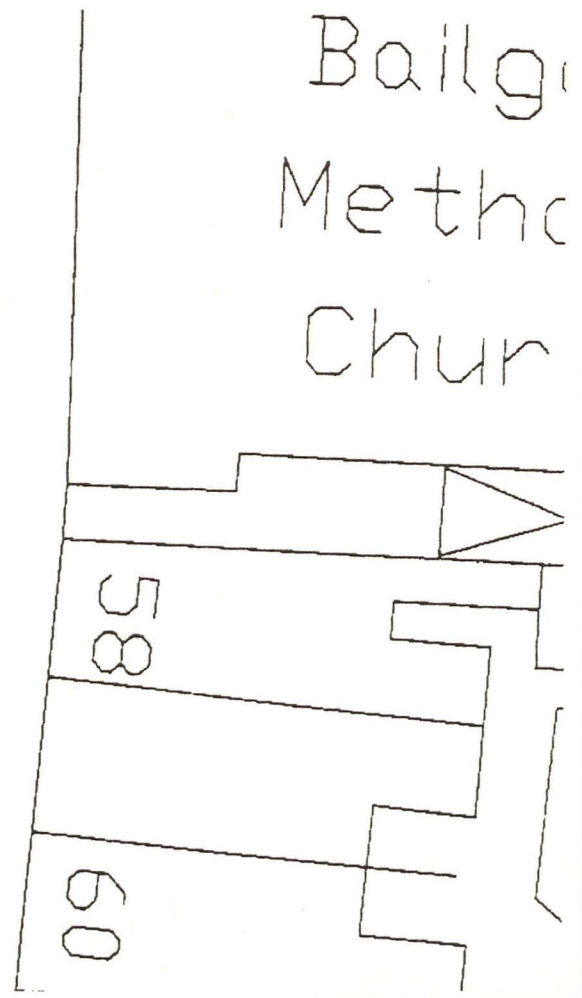
Based upon City Engineers and Surveyors Department's drawing no. DC0177/07/A

Fig.2

CITY OF LINCOLN ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT		
SITE CODE: RLB97	PLAN/ELEV/SECTION NO:	
CLIENT: City Engineering Consultants, Lincoln City Council		
DESCRIPTION: Plan of Proposed Works at North End of Bailgate (Junction with Chapel Lane)		
SCALE: 1:200	ARCHIVE NO:	
DRAWN BY:	CHECKED:	DATE:
MUSEUM ACCESSION NO: 54.97		



- KEY
- • New Bollards
 -  Raised Paved Area With Ramps
 -  New Kerbs and Footway Extensions



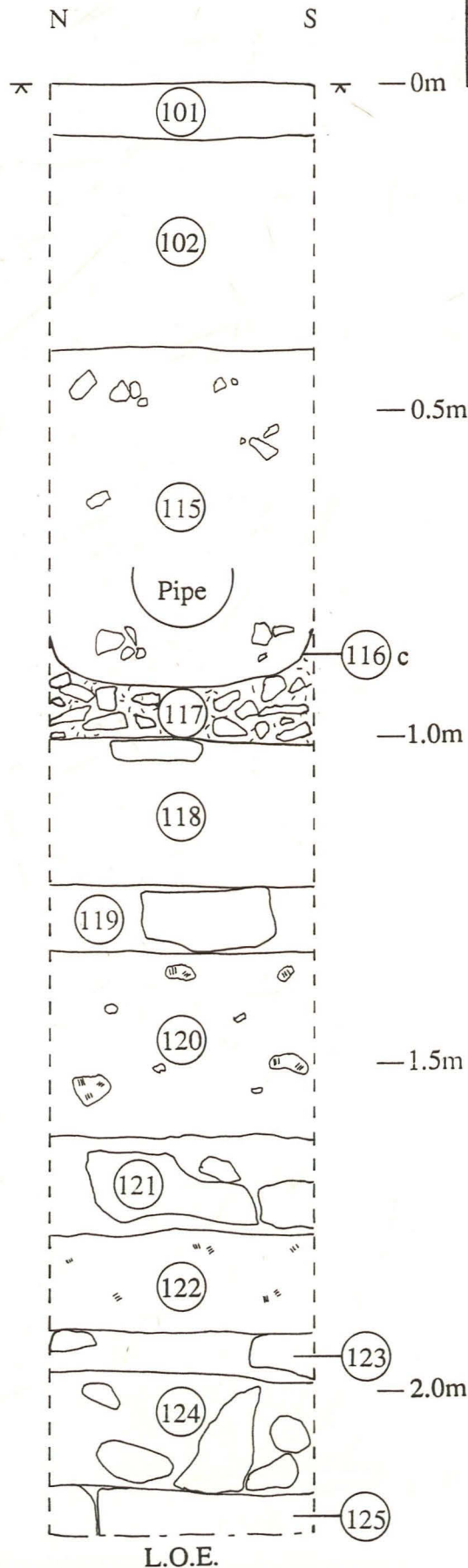
Based upon City Engineers and Surveyors Department's drawing no. DC0177/07/A

Fig.3

CITY OF LINCOLN ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT

SITE CODE: RLB97	PLANELEV/SECTION NO:	
CLIENT: City Engineering Consultants, Lincoln City Council		
DESCRIPTION: West-Facing Section		
SCALE: 1:10	ARCHIVE NO:	
DRAWN BY: K.W.	CHECKED:	DATE: 24/04/97
MUSEUM ACCESSION NO: 54.97		

Datum Height
67.55m O.D.



KEY



-  Mortar
-  Clay

Fig.4

CITY OF LINCOLN ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT		
SITE CODE: RLB97	PLAN/ELEV/SECTION NO:	
CLIENT: City Engineering Consultants, Lincoln City Council		
DESCRIPTION: East-Facing Section		
SCALE: 1:10	ARCHIVE NO:	
DRAWN BY: K.W.	CHECKED:	DATE: 24/04/97
MUSEUM ACCESSION NO: 54.97		

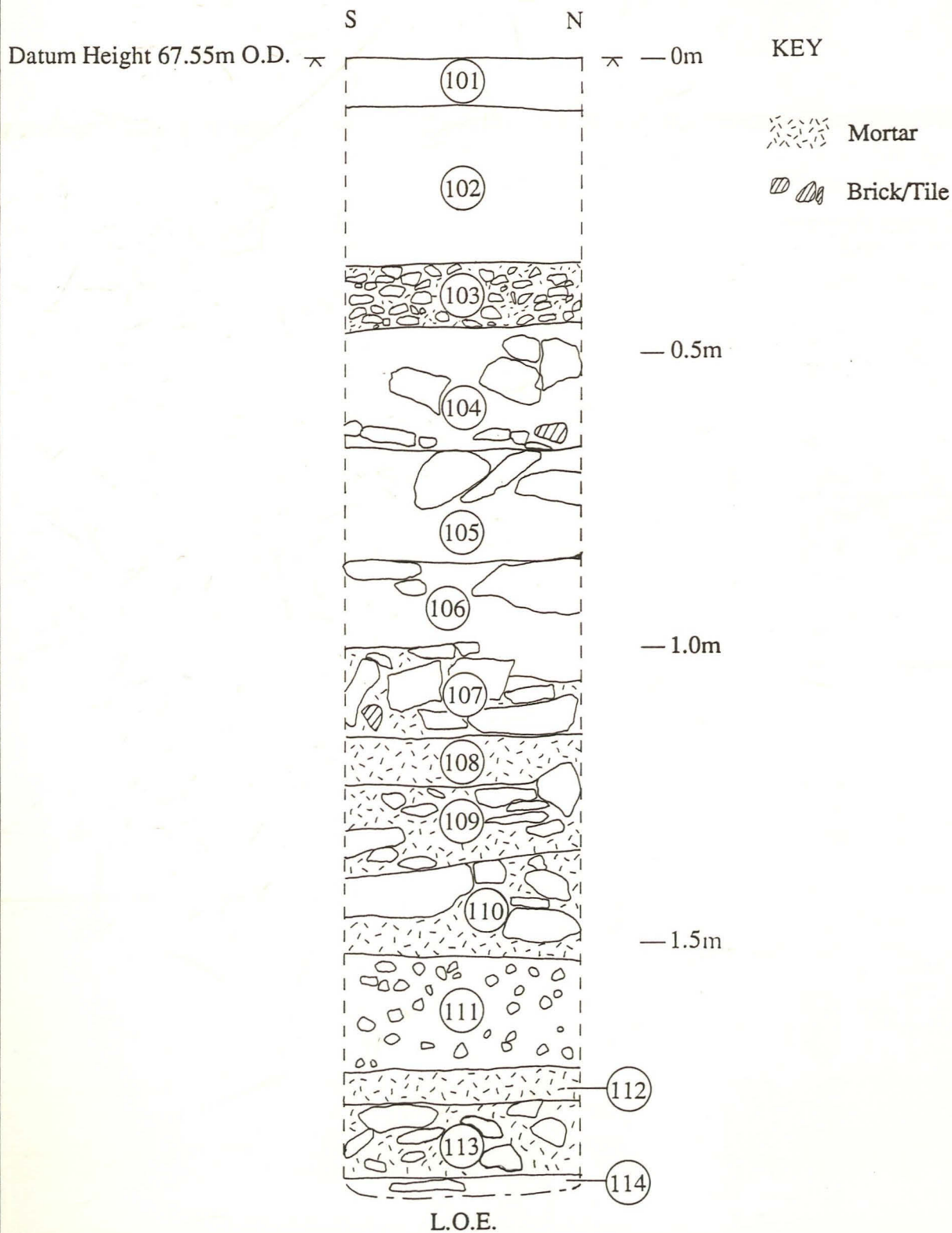


Fig.5