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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
AT
GREAT STURTON,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(GSV98)



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ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES

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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
AT
GREAT STURTON,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(GSV98)**

Work Undertaken For
Mr J Millington

Lincolnshire County Council
Archaeology Section

0 4. JUN 98

Report Compiled by
Neil Herbert BA (Hons)

June 1998

Planning Application No: N/065/1305/95
National Grid Reference: TF 21457664
City and County Museum Accession No: 54.98

A.P.S. Report No: 10/98

*Archaeological Project Services is an IFA Registered Archaeological
Organisation (No. 21)*

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1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of foundations for a dwelling and garage at Great Sturton, Lincolnshire. The development is situated close to the 11th century parish church of All Saints' and probably in the core of the medieval village.

Investigation of the site recorded a layer of topsoil overlying natural deposits of chalk. No archaeological features were identified, though several fragments of pottery, glass and tile dating from the 18th to the 20th century were found on the surface of the site. These artefacts probably represents manuring or refuse disposal from neighbouring properties.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Mr J Millington to undertake an archaeological watching brief during excavation of foundation trenches for a dwelling and garage on land at Great Sturton, Lincolnshire. Approval for the development was sought through submission of planning application N/065/1305/95. Permission was granted by East Lindsey District Council subject to a condition requiring the implementation of an archaeological watching brief. The work was carried out on the 5th February 1998, in accordance with a specification designed by Archaeological Project Services and approved by Lincolnshire County Council Archaeology Section (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

Great Sturton is situated approximately 25km east of Lincoln and 9km northwest of Horncastle in East Lindsey district, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1). The hamlet is located on the crest of a west-east orientated spur, which branches from a north-south ridge to the east, and overlooks a valley to the south (Fig. 2).

All Saints' parish church dominates the higher ground to the east of the modern settlement. The development site is situated almost 70m west of the parish church and forms a rectangular piece of land covering approximately 0.095 hectares, at National Grid Reference TF 2145 7664 (Fig. 3).

Ground at the site slopes gradually towards the south before dropping sharply at the southernmost boundary. To the north the plot is bounded by a small drainage ditch and a tarmac road (Fig. 4). The surface of the site lies at approximately 70m OD.

Local soils are of the Cannamore Association and Swaffham Prior Association, both calcareous earths on chalky till (Hodge *et. al.* 1984, 140; 316). Natural deposits recorded during excavation comprised an indurated chalk and flint till.

2.3 Archaeological Background

The proposed development site is located in an area of known archaeological activity of prehistoric and later date. A Bronze Age axe (2000-600 BC) is recorded from within the parish, though there is no firm evidence of prehistoric settlement in the area.

Romano-British (AD 43-410) roads exist in close proximity to the modern hamlet. The northernmost boundary of the parish is defined by the course of a Romano-British road between Sotby and Belchford (Fig. 2). To the east of the development, the modern course of High Street represents the route of a second Romano-British road linking Horncastle to Caistor (Whitwell 1970, 53).

Place-name evidence suggests that the settlement had originated during the medieval period (AD 1066-1500). Historical reference first occurs in the Domesday Book of 1086, mentioning *Stratone* or *Strettuna*. Later documentation in the Lindsey Survey of the 12th to 13th centuries refers to *Stratton* (Ekwall 1974, 452). The place-name derives from the Old English *straet*, meaning 'Roman road' and *tun*, meaning settlement or village, and therefore translates as 'settlement on a Roman road'. This therefore corresponds with the archaeological evidence of the nearby Romano-British roads.

The addition of 'Great' to the name of Sturton suggests this was the larger of two settlements (*ibid*, 203). A smaller settlement at Little Sturton was documented during the medieval period and is now represented by the site of Sturton Hall (Fig. 2). A chapel with a chantry was recorded there during the 12th and 13th centuries, though these have since collapsed or been demolished (Foster and Longley 1976, lxvii).

It is historically attested that the parish church at Great Sturton represents the foundation of a 'new' chapel outside of the landlord's original homestead, which was probably sited at Little Sturton. Great Sturton parish church was built and endowed by Robert, son of Hugh of Tattershall, and his villeins during the 11th century and probably represents prosperity and increased settlement during this period

(Owen 1971, 6).

Although a mill and church are mentioned in the Domesday Book (Foster and Longley 1976, xxi; 42) the economic well-being of Great Sturton was probably brief. Aerial photography has recorded the remains of surviving field systems and crofts within the parish which probably reflect shrinkage of the settlement.

All Saints' church contains Norman features and Early English painted decoration (Pevsner and Harris 1989, 333). Only the chancel and nave of the church still stand on the site and it is obvious that much of the original building has been removed. This cutting down of the church parallels the gradual decay of the village it served; so often in Lincolnshire the dense rural population of the Middle Ages went through a steady decline (*ibid*). Building rubble and stone is visible within the ditches that bound the churchyard and reflect the remains of some of the original structure. Furthermore, walling to the east is probably wholly constructed from this material.

White House Farm, to the southeast of the development (Fig. 3), is a 17th century mud-and-stud building with a thatched roof (DoE 1986, 9). Other post-medieval buildings bound the development to the west and east and are typical of those that make up the modern hamlet.

3. AIMS

The aim of the watching brief was to record and interpret archaeological features exposed during ground disturbance (Appendix 1).

4. METHODS

Approximately 0.25m of topsoil, across the entire surface of the site, was removed prior to the excavation of the foundation trenches. The remaining topsoil was fieldwalked and a representative sample of finds collected. Spoil heaps were also inspected for archaeological remains, though none were found.

Excavation of the footings was observed and a section of the exposed deposits was recorded at a scale of 1:10. Colour slide photographs were taken during groundworks, depicting the setting of the site and recording the deposits encountered.

5. RESULTS

5.1 The Stratigraphic Sequence

Finds recovered during the fieldwalking were examined and a date was assigned where possible. Records of the deposits excavated during groundworks 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, supplemented by artefact dating. A stratigraphic matrix of all identified deposits was produced. Two phases were identified:

Phase 1: Geological deposits

Phase 2: Topsoil deposits

Archaeological contexts are described below. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

5.2 Phase 1: Geological Deposits

A deposit of indurated, light yellowish-white chalk with occasional flint nodules (002)

was recorded from a depth of 0.35m to the limit of excavation. Interpreted as a layer of geological origin, this was observed within all of the foundation trenches. No finds were recovered from (002).

5.3 Phase 2: Topsoil Deposits

Loose, blackish-brown clayey sands (001) sealed the chalk to a thickness of at least 0.35m. The surface of (001) contained frequent small roots and had been colonised by various grasses and weeds. Fragments of glass, pottery and tile were found during the excavation of (001). Pieces of metal and plastic were also observed, though none retained.

6. DISCUSSION

Investigations within the area of development did not reveal any archaeological remains.

Excavations revealed a chalky deposit (002) which probably represents the weathered surface of natural bedrock which occurs across the Lincolnshire Wolds. This was sealed by a thick layer of topsoil containing artefacts of 18th to 20th century date which probably represent manuring scatter or sporadic refuse deposition from adjacent properties.

Although medieval remains, including earthworks and the 11th century church, are located close by, no evidence for occupation of the site was recorded. The site is known to have been used as a paddock until recently and the absence of medieval, or earlier, archaeological remains suggests that the immediate vicinity of the development was not occupied until the post-medieval period.

7. CONCLUSIONS

An archaeological watching brief was carried out during development at Great Sturton village because the site was close to the 11th century parish church in the core of the medieval settlement and there was a possibility that archaeological remains would be disturbed by construction.

However, no archaeological remains were encountered and only natural and modern deposits were identified. In consequence, it is probable that this area was not used for habitation. Artefacts of 18th-20th century date on the field surface perhaps indicate that the area was used for arable purposes during this period.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services would like to acknowledge the assistance of Mr J. Millington who commissioned the watching brief. Thanks are also due to Mr Malcolm Hickson for assistance on site. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor and this report was edited by Gary Taylor and Tom Lane. Mark Bennet and Sarah Grundy of Lincolnshire County Council Archaeology Section kindly provided information on archaeological sites in the area.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Gary Taylor
Site Supervisor: Neil Herbert
Finds Processing: Denise Buckley
Illustration: Neil Herbert
Post-Excavation Analysis: Neil Herbert

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services

DoE Department of the Environment

IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

LoE Limit of Excavation

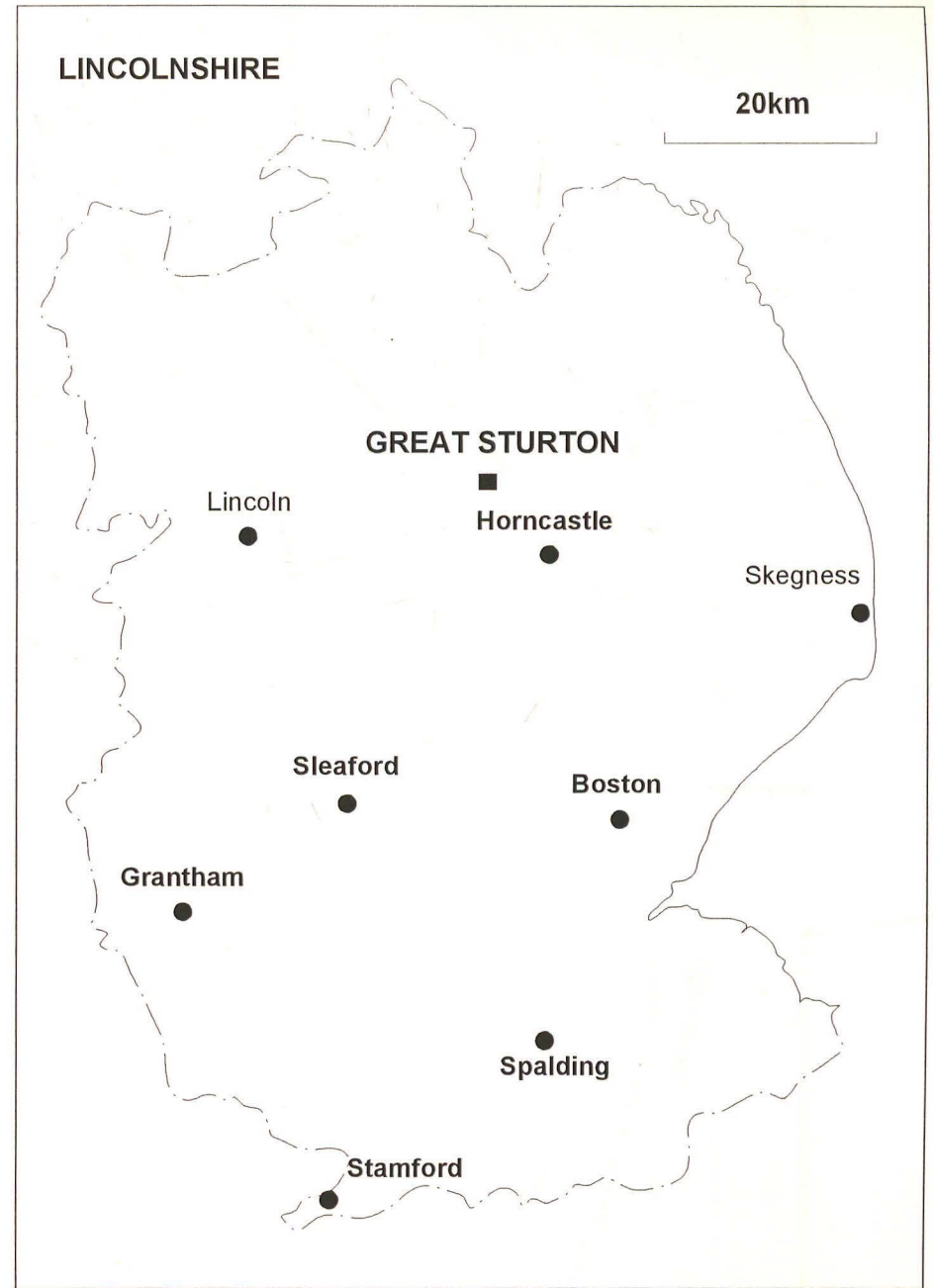
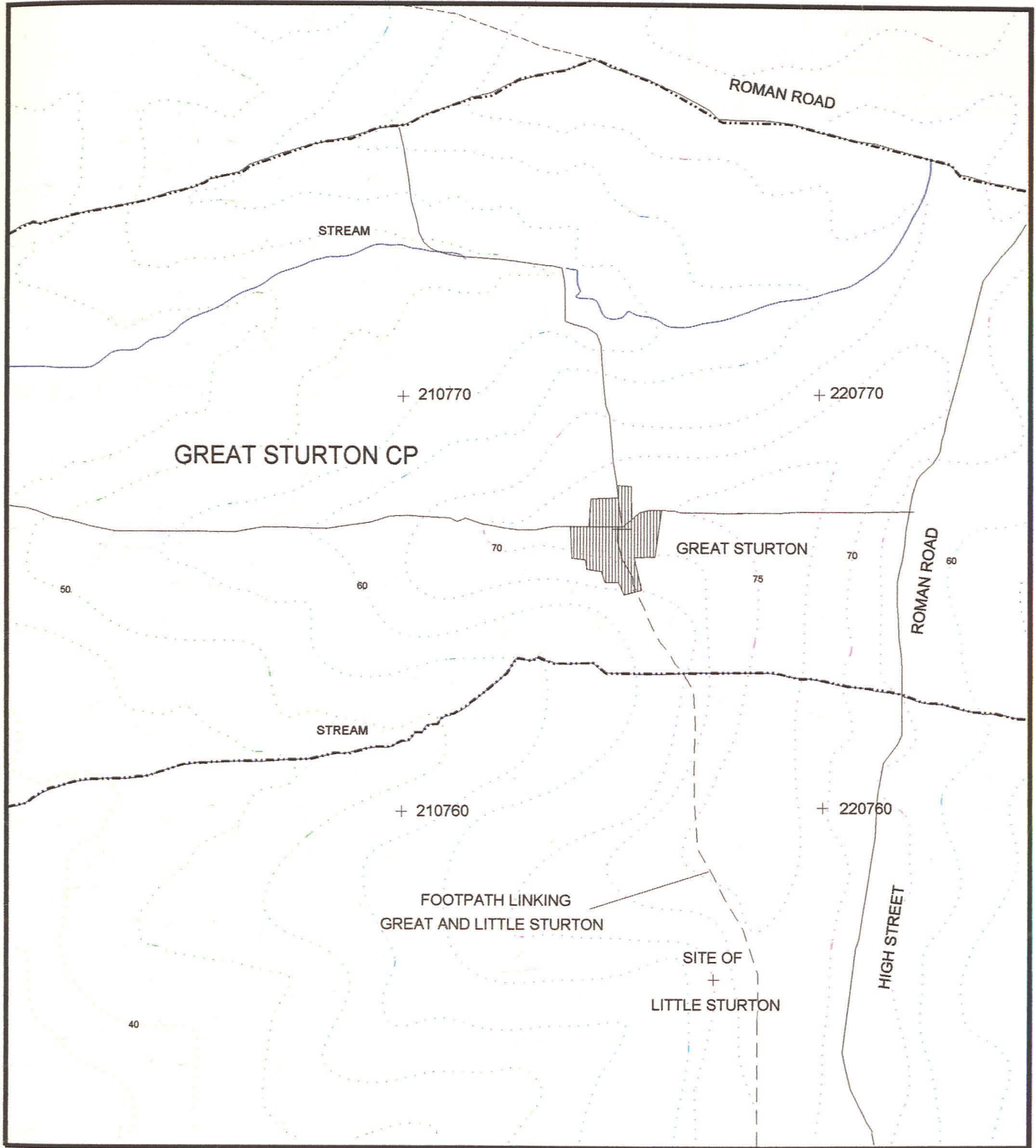





Figure 1: General location plan



KEY

-  CONTOUR
-  ROAD
-  PARISH BOUNDARY



est_lndy/gsv98/gsv98pl3.dwg2

Figure 2: The site in its archaeological and topographical setting

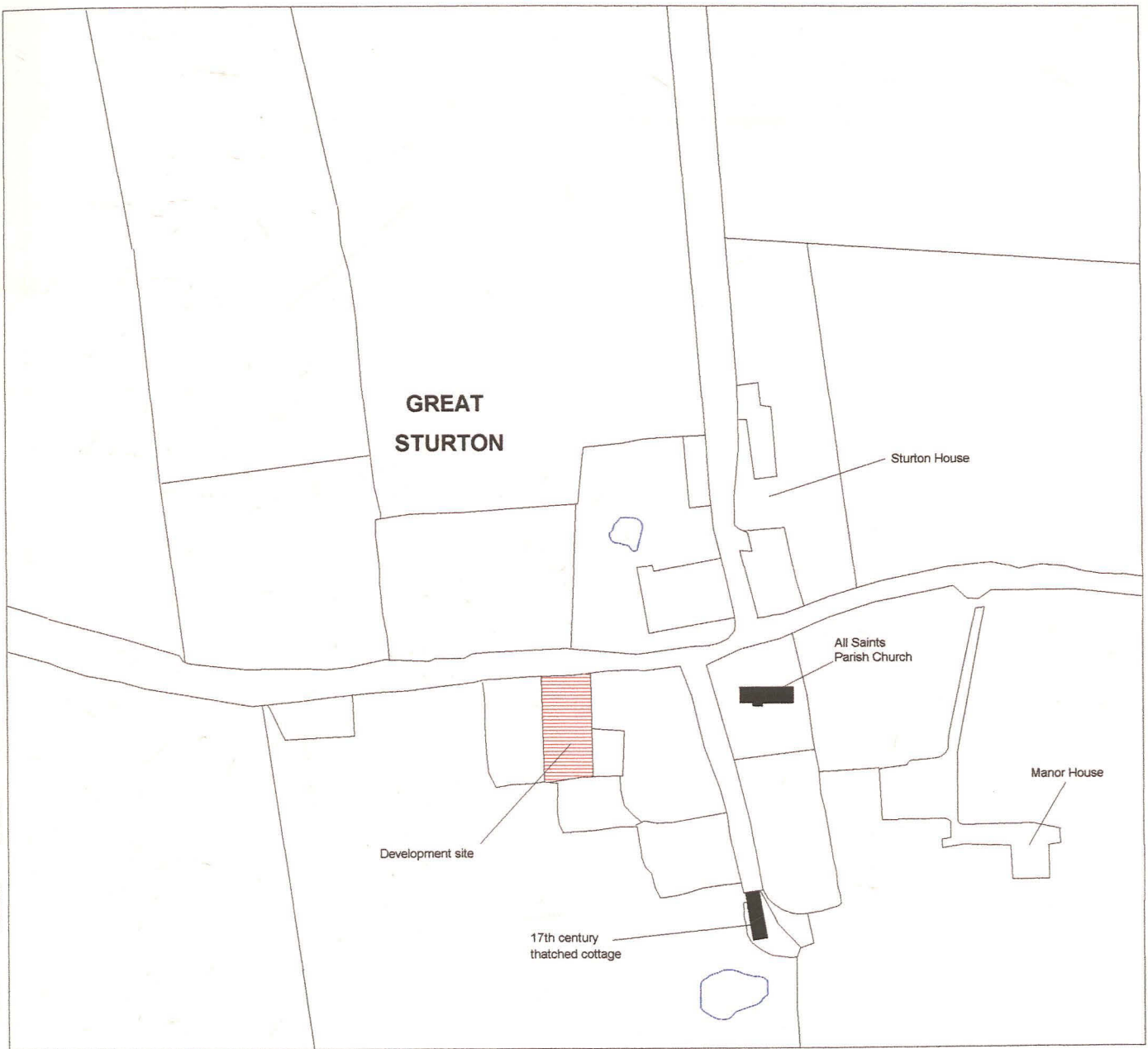


Figure 3: Plan showing location of development site

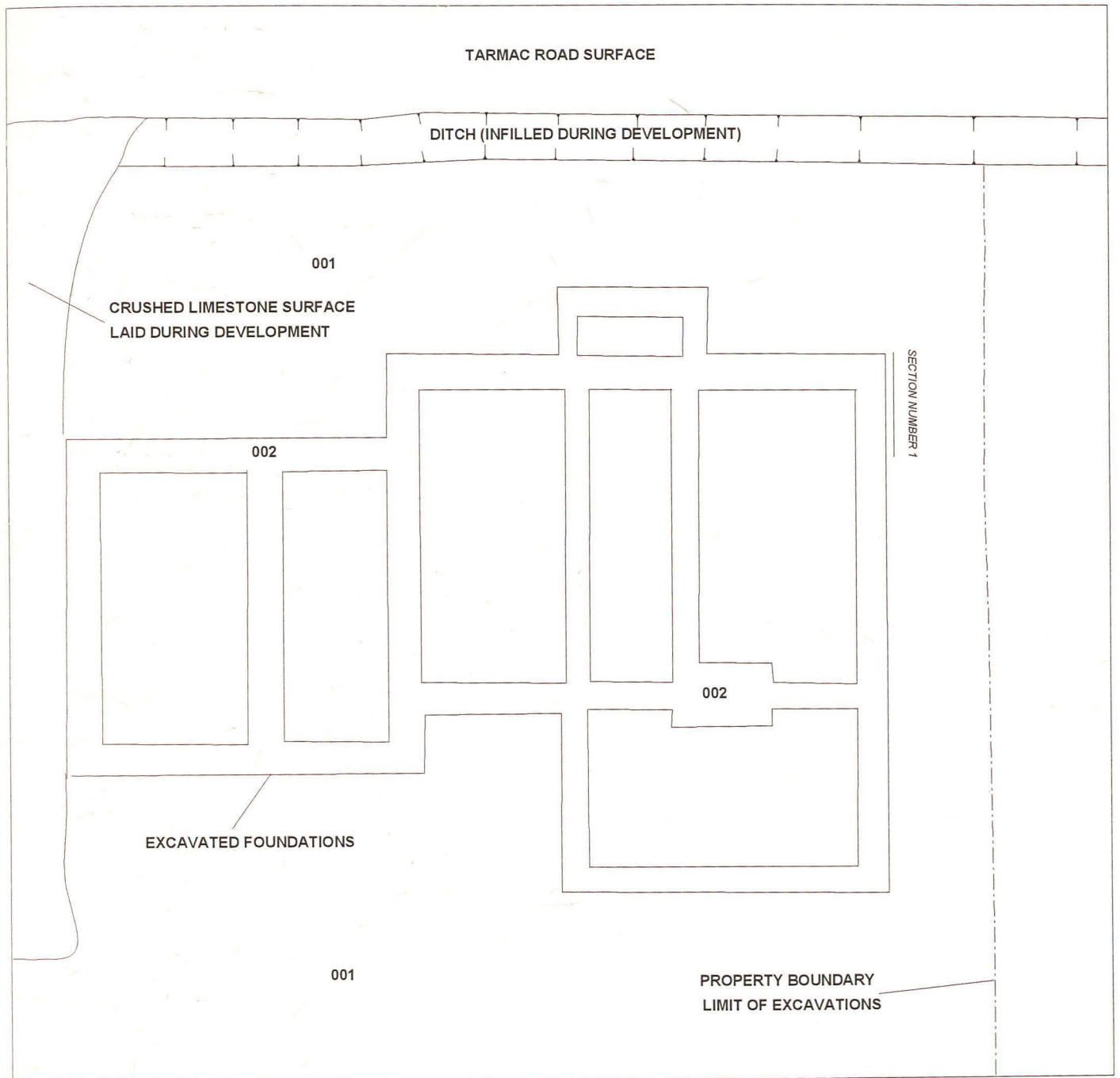


Figure 4: Plan of excavated footings showing location of recorded section

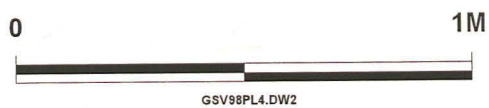
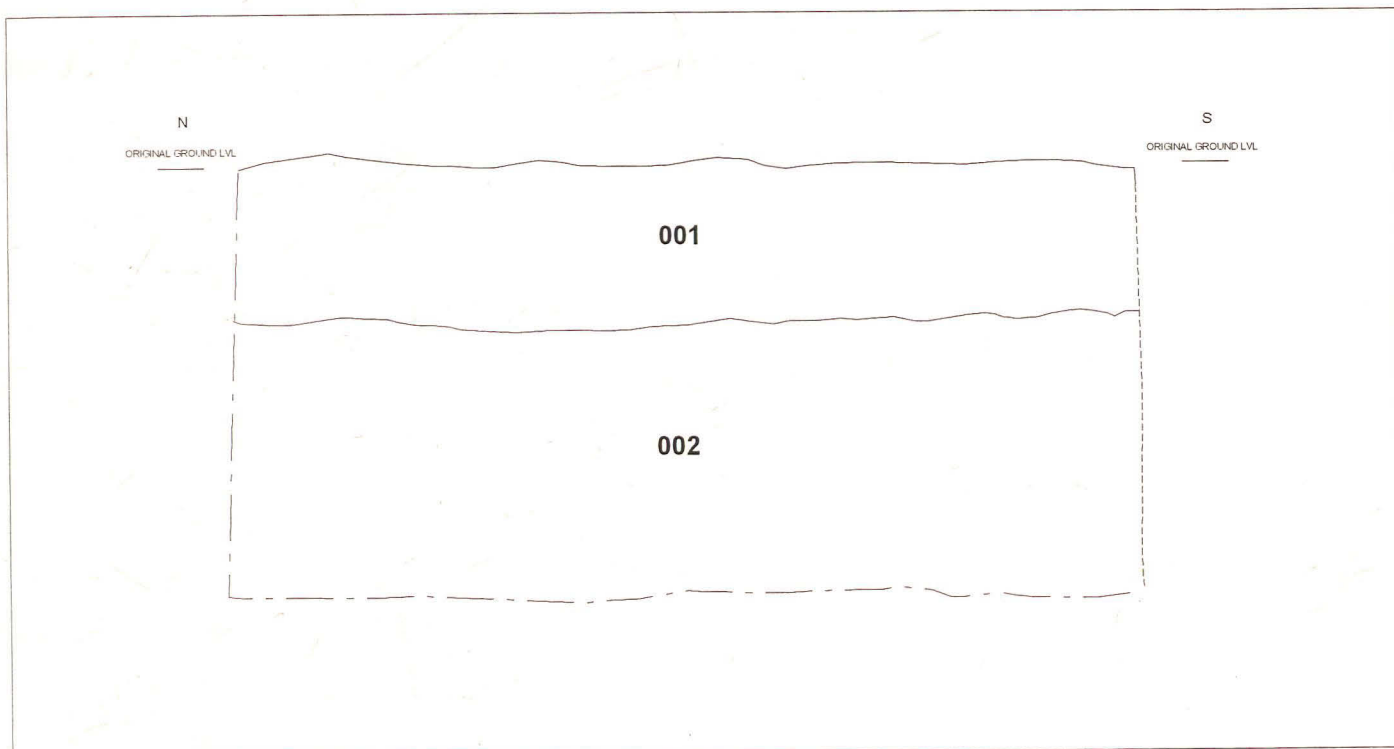


Figure 5: Section 1 showing sequence of recorded deposits

Appendix 1

LAND AT GREAT STURTON, LINCOLNSHIRE SPECIFICATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 *A watching brief is required during the construction of an extension at Great Sturton, Lincolnshire.*
- 1.2 *Great Sturton was mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 when it had a church and mill. The village is a shrunken medieval settlement, with remains of habitation around the present hamlet. The investigation site is within 100m of the Norman parish church.*
- 1.3 *The watching brief will be undertaken during groundworks associated with the development. The archaeological features exposed will be recorded in writing, graphically and photographically.*
- 1.4 *On completion of the fieldwork a report will be prepared detailing the findings of the work. The report will consist of a narrative supported by illustrations and photographs.*

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This document comprises a specification for an archaeological watching brief during the construction of a bungalow and garage at Great Sturton. The site is located at national grid reference TF215766
- 2.2 This document contains the following parts:
 - 2.2.1 Overview.
 - 2.2.2 Stages of work and methodologies.
 - 2.2.3 List of specialists.
 - 2.2.4 Programme of works and staffing structure of the project.

3 SITE LOCATION

- 3.1 Great Sturton is located approximately 25km east of Lincoln in the administrative district of East Lindsey. The site is situated approximately 70m west of the parish church at TF215766 and is used as a paddock.

4 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Planning permission (application number N/065/1305/95) for residential development has been granted by East Lindsey District Council, subject to a condition requiring the implementation of an archaeological watching brief.

5 SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 5.1 Great Sturton is located at the eastern limit of the Clay Vale at the foot of the Lincolnshire Wolds. The site and surrounding area lies at approximately 70m OD on a slope down to the west. Soils of the area are Cannamore Association and Swaffham Prior Association, both brown calcareous earths on chalky till (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 140; 316).

6 THE ARCHAEOLOGY

- 6.1 A Bronze Age axe is recorded from the parish though there is no evidence of prehistoric settlement in the area. Similarly, there are no records of Roman material from the parish.
- 6.2 Great Sturton is the site of a shrunken medieval settlement. Earthworks of the settlement remains and fields occur around the present hamlet. The parish church is located only 70m to the east of the site. The church was referred to in the Domesday Book of 1086 and incorporates pieces of Norman fabric. Domesday also records a mill in the parish. The decline in the settlement at the end of the medieval period is evident from the earthworks remains of former house plots and the reduction in size of the church during this period.

7 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 7.1 The aims of the watching brief will be:
- 7.1.1 To record and interpret the archaeological features exposed during ground disturbance.
- 7.2 The objectives of the watching brief will be to:
- 7.2.1 Determine the form and function of the archaeological features encountered;
- 7.2.2 Determine the spatial arrangement of the archaeological features encountered;
- 7.2.3 As far as practicable, recover dating evidence from the archaeological features, and
- 7.2.4 Establish the sequence of the archaeological remains present on the site.

8 SITE OPERATIONS

8.1 General considerations

- 8.1.1 All work will be undertaken following statutory Health and Safety requirements in operation at the time of the watching brief.
- 8.1.2 The work will be undertaken according to the relevant codes of practise issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

8.2 Methodology

- 8.2.1 The watching brief will be undertaken during the ground works phase of development, and includes the archaeological monitoring of all phases of soil movement.
- 8.2.2 The sections of the trenches will be observed regularly to identify and record archaeological features that are exposed and to record changes in the geological conditions. The plans of the trench and features will be drawn at a scale of 1:20. Section drawings of the trenches and features will be recorded at a scale of 1:10. Written descriptions detailing the nature of the deposits, features and fills encountered will be compiled on Archaeological Project Services pro-forma record sheets.
- 8.2.3 Any finds recovered will be bagged and labelled for later analysis.
- 8.2.4 Throughout the watching brief a photographic record consisting of colour prints will be compiled. The photographic record will consist of:
- 8.2.4.1 The site during work to show specific stages, and the layout of the

archaeology within the trench.

8.2.4.2 groups of features where their relationship is important

8.2.5 Should human remains be located the appropriate Home Office licence will be obtained before their removal. In addition, the Local Environmental Health Department and the police will be informed.

9 POST-EXCAVATION

9.1 Stage 1

9.1.1 On completion of site operations, the records and schedules produced during the watching brief will be checked and ordered to ensure that they form a uniform sequence forming a level II archive. A stratigraphic matrix of the archaeological deposits and features present on the site will be prepared. All photographic material will be catalogued: the colour prints will be labelled, the labelling referring to schedules identifying the subject/s photographed.

9.1.2 All finds recovered during the field work will be washed, marked and packaged according to the deposit from which they were recovered. Any finds requiring specialist treatment and conservation will be sent to the Conservation Laboratory at the City and County Museum, Lincoln.

9.2 Stage 2

9.2.1 Detailed examination of the stratigraphic matrix to enable the determination of the various phases of activity on the site.

9.2.2 Finds will be sent to specialists for identification and dating.

9.3 Stage 3

9.3.1 On completion of stage 2, a report detailing the findings of the watching brief will be prepared.

9.3.2 This will consist of:

9.3.2.1 A description of the archaeological setting of the watching brief.

9.3.2.2 Description of the topography of the site.

9.3.2.3 Description of the methodologies used during the watching brief.

9.3.2.4 A text describing the findings of the watching brief.

9.3.2.5 A consideration of the local, regional and national context of the watching brief findings.

9.3.2.6 Plans of the archaeological features exposed. If a sequence of archaeological deposits is encountered, separate plans for each phase will be produced.

9.3.2.7 Sections of the archaeological features.

9.3.2.8 Interpretation of the archaeological features exposed, and their chronology and setting within the surrounding landscape.

9.3.2.9 Specialist reports on the finds from the site.

9.3.2.10 Appropriate photographs of specific archaeological features.

10 **REPORT DEPOSITION**

10.1 Copies of the report will be sent to the client; the County Council Archaeological Sites and Monuments Record; and to East Lindsey District Council Planning Department.

11 **ARCHIVE**

11.1 The documentation and records generated during the watching brief will be sorted and ordered into the format acceptable to the City and County Museum, Lincoln. This will be undertaken following the requirements of the document titled *Conditions for the Acceptance of Project Archives* for long term storage and curation.

12 **PUBLICATION**

12.1 A report of the findings of the watching brief will be published in Heritage Lincolnshire's Annual Report and a note presented to the editor of the journal of the Society for Lincolnshire History and Archaeology. If appropriate, notes on the findings will be submitted to the appropriate national journals: *Britannia* for discoveries of Roman date, and *Medieval Archaeology* and the journal of the *Medieval Settlement Research Group* for findings of medieval or later date.

13 **CURATORIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

13.1 Curatorial responsibility for the archaeological work undertaken on the site lies with the Archaeology Officer, Lincolnshire County Council. They will be given seven days notice in writing before the commencement of the project.

14 **VARIATIONS**

14.1 Variations to the proposed scheme of works will only be made following written confirmation of acceptance from the Archaeology Officer, Lincolnshire County Council.

15 **PROGRAMME OF WORKS AND STAFFING LEVELS**

15.1 The watching brief will be integrated with the programme of construction.

15.2 An archaeological supervisor with experience of watching briefs will undertake the work.

15.3 Post-excavation analysis and report production will be undertaken by the archaeological supervisor, or a post-excavation analyst as appropriate, with assistance from a finds supervisor, illustrator and external specialists. It is expected that each fieldwork day (equal to one man-day) will require a post-excavation day (equal to one-and-a-half man-days) for completion of the analysis and report, unless particularly dense and complicated remains are revealed. If the fieldwork exceeds 5 days then there is likely to be an economy of scale with the analysis and reporting, unless particularly dense and complicated archaeological remains are revealed.

16 **SPECIALISTS TO BE USED DURING THE PROJECT**

16.1 The following organisations/persons will, in principal and if necessary, be used as subcontractors to provide the relevant specialist work and reports in respect of any objects or material recovered during the investigation that require their expert knowledge and input. Engagement of any particular specialist subcontractor is also dependent on their availability and ability to meet programming requirements.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Body to be undertaking the work</u>
Conservation	Conservation Laboratory, City and County Museum, Lincoln
Pottery Analysis	Prehistoric - Trent & Peak Archaeological Trust Roman - B Precious, independent specialist

	Saxon - City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit
	Medieval and later - H Healey, independent archaeologist
Non-pottery Artefacts	J Cowgill, independent specialist
Animal Bones	Environmental Archaeology Consultancy
Human Remains Analysis	R Gowland, independent specialist

17 **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Hodge, CAH, Burton, RGO, Corbett, WM, Evans, R, and Seale, RS, 1984 *Soils and their use in Eastern England*, Soil Survey of England and Wales **13**

Appendix 2

Context Summary

Context Number	Description	Phase	Interpretation
001	Loose, black-brown clayey sand containing occasional sub-rounded chalk fragments and occasional roots. Approximately 0.35m thick.	2	Topsoil, overlying (002)
002	Indurated, light yellowish-white flinty chalk containing occasional lenses of mid orange-brown clay. Approximately 0.6m thick to the limit of excavations.	1	Natural deposit, recorded at the limit of excavations

Appendix 3

The Finds, By Hilary Healey and Gary Taylor

Provenance

All of the material was recovered from the topsoil and was random in distribution.

All of the assemblage is relatively modern, of 18th-19th century date. The majority of the material is likely to derive from sources/production sites in the Midlands, particularly Staffordshire.

Range

The range of material is detailed in the table.

The earliest artefacts are fragments of pottery of probable 18th century date. However, the majority of the assemblage is 19th-20th century in date and includes pottery, ceramic tile and glass.

CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	DATE
001	1x black basalt-type ware; 1x cream ware; 2x blue and white transfer printed; 1x black glazed earthenware; 2x pieces porcelain (separate vessels); 1x white glazed tableware; 3x underglaze blue painted ware; 1x handmade plantpot?; 2x pantile?; 1x piece of vessel glass	late 18th-early 19th century; late 18th-early 19th century; 19th-early 20th century; 18th-19th century; 19th-20th century; 19th-20th century; 19th century; 19th century? 19th century

Condition

All the material is in good condition and presents no long-term storage problems. The assemblage should be archived by material class.

Documentation

Post-medieval artefact assemblages from throughout the county have previously been examined and reported.

Potential

The assemblage has limited potential, though may assist in defining the status and nature of the occupation of the site over the last two centuries.

Appendix 4

The Archive

The archive consists of:

2	Context records
2	Sheets of scale drawings
1	Photographic record sheet
1	Bag of finds
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 titled *Conditions for the Acceptance of Project Archives*, produced by the Lincolnshire City and County Museum.

Lincolnshire City and County Council Museum Accession Number: 54.98

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: GSV98

The discussion and comments provided in this report are based on the archaeology revealed during the site investigations. Other archaeological finds and features may exist on the development site but away from the areas exposed during the course of this fieldwork. *Archaeological Project Services* cannot confirm that those areas unexposed are free from archaeology nor that any archaeology present there is of a similar character to that revealed during the current investigation.

Archaeological Project Services shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act* 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project Specification.

Appendix 5

Glossary of Terms

Bronze Age	Period dating from <i>c.</i> 2000 - 600 BC and characterised by the introduction and use of bronze and other copper alloys for tools and weapons.
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).
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.
Romano-British	Pertaining to the period from AD 43-410 when Britain formed part of the Roman Empire.
Till	Deposit of stiff clay, boulders, sand, <i>etc.</i> , laid down by glaciers during the Ice Age.