

EL MB

M4/23

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
AND BUILDING RECORDING  
AT 37 HIGH STREET,  
ROPSLEY, *sketch*  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
(HSR 01)**



**A P S**  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
PROJECT  
SERVICES

WATCHING BRIEF EVENT: L15591 PRN: 63532 undated.  
BUILDING SURVEY EVENT: L15593 PRN: 63531 post-medieval

INTERVENTION: L19743  
EXCAVATION: L19744

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
AND BUILDING RECORDING  
AT 37 HIGH STREET,  
ROPSLEY, SK20T  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
(HSR 01)**

**Work Undertaken For  
Mr R. Cooper**

November 2004

Report Compiled by  
Paul Cope-Faulkner BA (Hons) AIFA  
and Gary Taylor MA

National Grid Reference: SK-9932-3432- 9934 3424  
Planning Reference: S01/0001/65 ←  
City and County Museum Accession No: 2001.163

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT SERVICES**

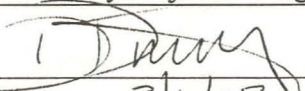
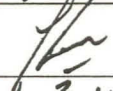


APS Report No. 158/04



**Quality Control**  
37 High Street, Ropsley  
HSR 01

|                           |                                   |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Project Coordinator       | Gary Taylor                       |
| Supervisors               | Jim Snee, Gary Taylor             |
| Finds Processing          | Denise Buckley                    |
| Illustration              | Paul Cope-Faulkner, David Hopkins |
| Photographic Reproduction | Sue Unsworth                      |
| Post-excavation Analyst   | Paul Cope-Faulkner, Gary Taylor   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Checked by Project Manager   | Approved by Senior Archaeologist  |
|  Denise Drury |  Tom Lane |
| Date: 3/11/04  | Date: 3.11.04   |

## Table of Contents

### List of Figures

### List of Plates

|     |   |   |
|-----|---|---|
| 1.  | SUMMARY .....   | 1 |
| 2.  | INTRODUCTION.....   | 1 |
| 2.1 | DEFINITIONS OF A WATCHING BRIEF AND BUILDING RECORDING..... | 1 |
| 2.2 | PLANNING BACKGROUND.....                                    | 1 |
| 2.3 | TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY .....                                | 1 |
| 2.4 | ARCHAEOLOGICAL SETTING .....                                | 2 |
| 3.  | AIMS .....  | 2 |
| 4.  | METHODS .....   | 2 |
| 5.  | RESULTS .....   | 3 |
| 5.1 | RESULTS OF THE WATCHING BRIEF .....                         | 3 |
| 5.2 | RESULTS OF THE BUILDING RECORDING .....                     | 4 |
| 6.  | DISCUSSION .....  | 5 |
| 7.  | CONCLUSION .....  | 6 |
| 8.  | ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....                                      | 7 |
| 9.  | PERSONNEL .....   | 7 |
| 10. | BIBLIOGRAPHY .....  | 7 |
| 11. | ABBREVIATIONS .....   | 7 |

### Appendices

1. Specification for archaeological watching brief and building recording
2. Context descriptions
3. The Finds *by Jane Cowgill and Gary Taylor*
4. Glossary
5. The Archive

### **List of Figures**

- Figure 1      General location plan
- Figure 2      Site location plan
- Figure 3      Plan of the development showing section locations
- Figure 4      Sections 1 to 4
- Figure 5      Ground plan of the two barns
- Figure 6      Exterior elevations of the barns
- Figure 7      Roof arrangement, East barn
- Figure 8      Roof arrangement, West barn

### **List of Plates**

- Plate 1      View of the development
- Plate 2      Section 3
- Plate 3      Section 4
- Plate 4      View showing the barns from the northwest, showing the join between the two and the scar outline of a further outhouse
- Plate 5      View of the barns from the southwest
- Plate 6      View showing roof trusses in the eastern barn
- Plate 7      View showing roof trusses in the western barn

## 1. SUMMARY

*A programme of archaeological investigations was undertaken at 37 High Street, Ropsley, Lincolnshire. A watching brief was undertaken during groundworks for new extensions and building recording was carried out on two barns.*

*Ropsley is located in an area of dense archaeological remains largely revealed during extensive fieldwalking of the parish. A Neolithic (4000-2200 BC) settlement is known from south of the village and Bronze Age (2200-800 BC) remains have also been recorded. A Romano-British (AD 43-410) settlement has been identified to the south which appears to have had an Iron Age (800 BC-AD 43) precursor. During the medieval period (AD 1066-1540) a settlement grew up around the 10<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> century church of St. Peter.*

*The watching brief identified an undated pit, dumped deposit, former topsoil and a make-up deposit. Foundation trenches for the two post-medieval buildings, which are the subject of the building survey, were also recorded. Finds retrieved from the investigation comprise tap slag from iron smelting.*

*The building survey recorded the structural remains of two 18<sup>th</sup> century agricultural buildings, both interpreted as chaff houses for the storage of fodder.*

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Definitions of a Watching Brief and Building Recording

*An archaeological watching brief is defined as "a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where*

*there is a possibility that archaeological deposits maybe disturbed or destroyed."* (IFA 1999a).

*Archaeological Building Investigation and Recording is defined as 'a programme of work intended to establish the character, history, dating, form and archaeological development of a specific building, or structure or complex and its setting, including its buried component' (IFA 1999b).*

### 2.2 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Mr R. Cooper to undertake an archaeological watching brief and building recording during groundworks associated with residential development at 37 High Street, Ropsley, Lincolnshire. Approval for the development was sought through the submission of planning application S01/0001/65. The archaeological works were carried out between the 9<sup>th</sup> October 2001 and 13<sup>th</sup> August 2003, in accordance with a specification prepared by Archaeological Project Services (Appendix 1) and approved by the South Kesteven Community Archaeologist.

### 2.3 Topography and Geology

Ropsley is located 5km east of Grantham and 14km southwest of Sleaford in the administrative district of South Kesteven, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The site is situated 70m east of the centre of the village as defined by the parish church of St. Peter at National Grid Reference SK 9932 3432 (Fig. 2). The site lies at a height of c. 78m OD on land that slopes down to the south and east.

Local soils are of the Elmton 1 Association, typically brown rendzinas with small areas of deeper brown calcareous earths (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 179). These soils are developed upon a solid

geology of Jurassic Upper Lincolnshire Limestone (GSGB 1972).

## 2.4 Archaeological Setting

Ropsley is located in an area of known archaeological remains dating from the Neolithic period to the present day. An extensive field survey undertaken in the late 1970s revealed evidence of Neolithic settlement 1km south of the village, with flint tools and waste from their manufacture being recorded throughout the parish (Lane 1995, 11).

Bronze Age remains are also known from throughout the parish and include 3 possible barrows as well as pottery and flint tools (*ibid.* 15).

A Romano-British settlement from which a small quantity of Iron Age material was identified lies less than 1km south of the village (*ibid.* 22).

Saxon remains are best represented by St. Peter's church which has a nave that dates from the 10<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> century (Taylor and Taylor 1980, 522). Subsequent additions were made to the church in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries (Pevsner and Harris 1989, 613).

Ropsley is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of c. 1086. Referred to as *Ropeslai* the name is derived from the Old English and means the wood or glade (*lēah*) of *Hropp* (Cameron 1998, 103). At the time of the Domesday Survey the land was held by Robert de Toden and contained a church, 120 acres of woodland for pannage and 450 acres of underwood (Foster and Longley 1976).

A watching brief undertaken 250m west of the site revealed undated pits and posthole, a post-medieval pit and a modern ditch (Hall 2000, 1).

## 3. AIMS

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

The aim of the building survey and analysis was to make a record of the historic building prior to alteration. The objectives were to establish the form and function of the buildings at the site, to establish the date and development sequence of the structures and features of special interest present, and to establish the state of preservation of the buildings and any features of special interest on the site.

## 4. METHODS

Foundation trenches for the new extensions were excavated by machine to depths required by the development. The sides of the trenches were cleaned and rendered vertical. Selected deposits were then partially excavated by hand to determine their nature and to retrieve artefactual material. Each deposit encountered was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and their descriptions appears as Appendix 2. A photographic record was compiled and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10. Recording was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services' practice.

The building structure and present layout of the site was recorded to Level 1 of the RCHME guidance (RCHME 1996). This involved the production of a visual record supplemented by information needed to identify the buildings location, age and type. This was supplemented by measured drawings of particular aspects of the building.

Following excavation, the records were examined and a stratigraphic matrix produced. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them.

## 5. RESULTS

### 5.1 Results of the watching brief

Following post-excavation analysis four phases were identified;

|         |                        |
|---------|------------------------|
| Phase 1 | Natural deposits       |
| Phase 2 | Undated deposits       |
| Phase 3 | Post-medieval deposits |
| Phase 4 | Recent deposits        |

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

#### Phase 1 Natural deposits

The earliest deposit encountered during the watching brief, at the east end of the development, was a greyish yellow limestone (007) that was over 0.8m thick. This was identified as the underlying solid geology.

Developed above the limestone was a 0.35m thick subsoil of greyish brown sandy clay (010). Subsoil, comprising yellowish brown sandy clay (017) was identified at the western end of the development.

#### Phase 2 Undated deposits

Located west of the barns and cut into the subsoil (017) was a sub-circular feature (019). This measured 1.4m wide by 0.32m deep (Fig. 4, Section 4). This pit contained a single fill of black silty clay with charcoal (018) and had evidence for burning along the edges.

Sealing the pit was a dumped deposit comprising greyish brown sandy clay with charcoal, limestone fragments and slag (016). This was 0.2m thick and had subsequently been sealed by a former topsoil of greyish brown sandy clay (015).

Above this layer was a deposit of made ground comprising greyish brown silty sand with gravel and limestone (013).

#### Phase 3 Post-medieval deposits

At the eastern end of the extant barns, foundation trenches for these buildings were recorded. The first for the barn fronting the High Street (006) was 1.1m wide by 0.45m deep (Fig. 4, Section 1). Three fills were contained within the foundation trench, a lower fill of yellowish brown gritty sand (005), beneath a brown sandy clay with limestone (004) with an upper fill of brownish grey gravel and clayey grit (003).

The second foundation trench (011), cut through subsoil (010), was also 1.1m wide with a depth of 0.4m (Fig. 4, Section 2). A single fill of greyish brown sandy clay with large fragments of limestone (009) was recorded.

#### Phase 4 Recent deposits

Above the foundation trench for the easterly barn was a former topsoil comprising a 0.15m thick deposit of yellowish brown silty sand (002). This was sealed beneath a grey concrete path (001).

Sealing the foundation trench for the western barn was a light grey concrete layer (008) representing the modern yard surface.

West of, and adjacent to, the western barn was a topsoil of greyish brown silty sand (012) varying to greyish brown sandy clay (021) to the south. The topsoil (021) had subsequently been sealed beneath a



hardstanding of yellowish brown limestone fragments (021)

## 5.2 Results of the Building Recording

### *Description of the exterior and general observations (Figs. 5 and 6)*

Externally the structure is two-storeys high and comprises two linked buildings of coursed limestone rubble with a red pantile roof (Plates 4 and 5). A straight join between the two buildings is apparent on the north and south sides. Quoins are evident at each corner of the eastern building but there are only a few quoins at the west end of the western building and none on its easterly side. There is no break in the roof line, though there is a slight ridge in the apex where it crosses the dividing wall.

In the southern elevation are two Dutch doors with timber lintels, one to each building. On the eastern side of the east door is a triangular ventilator opening about 1.5m from ground level.

There is a further Dutch door with timber lintel in the western elevation. This door has a brick step or plinth and the surround of the door, particularly the left side, looks no earlier than the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Above the door is the scar of a single storey gable from a removed building that was formerly attached on the western side.

The northern elevation is lower than the other three as it is set into a bank, formed by a causeway track leading from the High Street, on the east, westward to the church. Immediately west of the straight join between the two buildings is a blocked entry with a timber lintel. This opening, like a window in size, is in the upper storey. Approximately 1.2m east of the straight join is a further, partial, straight join. There is no obvious matching pair to this. Toward the eastern end of the

elevation is a low section where the masonry steps back slightly.

In the eastern elevation at upper storey level, is a wooden shuttered opening with a timber lintel. Otherwise this gable is plain.

### *Description of the interiors and detailed observations*

#### Eastern Building

This structure also has a lath-work ceiling, and the floor is a mixture of areas of concrete, cobbles and earth.

High in the western dividing wall and eastern external wall are wood-shuttered entries. Beneath the shuttered entry in the east wall is a 0.25m deep rectangular alcove. Within the north wall is a wooden lintel indicating a blocked entry.

A north-south beam crosses the room about 0.1-0.15m below the eaves. This beam is cut from a trunk that has only partially been squared off. Supported by this beam are diagonal timber struts in a V-shaped pattern (Fig. 7). Formed from thin birch trunks that still retain bark, these struts rise to clasp the upper sides of the purlins.

There are collars running between every fourth pair of common rafters, and the purlins are clasped.

#### Western Building

This structure also has a ceiling of lath-work and a concrete floor. In the northwestern corner of this building is a brick-built hearth with a triangular chimney above. This hearth appears to have been for a boiler, though this is no longer present.

The blocked window observed on the exterior northern elevation is also apparent internally. High in the eastern wall is a wood-shuttered entry with a timber lintel.

A north-south beam crosses the room about 0.35-0.4m below the eaves. This beam has joist sockets in its west side, but not its eastern face. This beam supports a V-shaped arrangement of diagonal timber struts and, either side of this, two short studs (Fig. 8). Both of the diagonal struts rise to the upper parts of the purlins. The stud on the south of the V-shaped struts supports a plank, while that to the north carries a rounded beam, both of these members running east-west across the room.

Collars are present intermittently connecting the common rafters, and the purlins are clasped.

## 6. DISCUSSION

Natural deposits (Phase 1) comprise limestone of the underlying Upper Lincolnshire Limestone. Natural subsoil had then developed above the limestone.

Undated deposits (Phase 2) comprise a pit which showed evidence of *in-situ* burning within it. This was sealed by a dumped deposit containing slag and together may point to some industrial activity at the site. A former topsoil and a deposit of made-ground also remain undated due to a lack of artefactual material.

Post-medieval deposits (Phase 3) are dated based on their relationship to the standing barns. As such, these deposits can probably be dated to the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The recorded structures comprise two linked stone buildings. Straight joins between the two structures show them to have been built at different times. Moreover, this is elaborated by the presence of quoins at the corners of the eastern barn where the two buildings meet, indicating that this easterly edifice was the first construction. It seems likely that the earlier, eastern, barn is closely contemporary with the adjacent house,

which has a datestone of 1709. It is also likely that the western barn was added soon after, almost certainly in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. A scar of a removed gable indicates that there was previously a single storey extension to the west side of the western barn. All of the surviving entries to the two barns are via Dutch doors.

There are timber-shuttered openings in both the east and west gables of the earlier, eastern, building. On the exterior of the building these openings are at first floor level. However, there is no first floor internally, and no joist sockets to suggest there ever was one. There is also a blocked opening high in the north wall of the westerly barn.

These openings are pitching holes and such features occur in several types of agricultural buildings, including barns, chaff houses, hay lofts over cow houses, shelter sheds or stables, and granaries over stables (Barnwell and Giles 1997; Brunskill 1999). However, other characteristics of the recorded buildings eliminate most of these possibilities. In particular, the absence of a first floor in the eastern building means that the pitching holes cannot be serving haylofts or granaries and, therefore, this building is not a cow house or stable. Similarly, it is not a shelter shed as such buildings had an open front. Thus, the eastern building would appear to be a barn or chaff house. As these types of structures had similar functions, the storage and processing of crops, they share a variety of characteristics, including the absence of a first floor. However, barns are typically larger than chaff houses, and have a threshing floor and large opposed doorways, whereas chaff houses lack the threshing floor and usually have a single, small doorway (Barnwell and Giles 1997, 60). The recorded buildings are both small, little more than 5m x 3m in area, do not have threshing floors and are entered by single Dutch doors. Consequently, these buildings appear to be chaff houses.

Chaff houses usually contained a chopping machine, often hand-powered though later ones were driven by machine (*ibid.*, 60-1). The brick-built hearth and chimney in the western barn may be a remnant of such a mechanism. A boiler would have sat on, and been heated by, the fire and then sent steam to an engine that would have driven a chopping machine (Brunskill 1999, 57). Fixed steam engines are generally only found on the largest farms and powered numerous pieces of machinery (*ibid.*, 59). However, the boiler here appears to have been small and the engine it drove would have been comparably limited in size and power. This hearth and chimney is not original to the building but a later, perhaps 19<sup>th</sup> century, insertion.

The beam crossing the western building has joist sockets on one side. It is not clear if this beam was re-used from elsewhere or if it signifies the presence of an upper floor to this building. However, if the latter was the case the floor only covered half the building, as there are no joist sockets on the opposite side of the beam.

Both buildings have similar roof trusses, though these are not to any standard pattern. Although there are collars they are not present between every pair of rafters, and thus it is not a collar rafter roof (Brunskill 1994, 171). The trusses are founded on dropped tie beams that are socketed into the masonry below the tops of the walls. These dropped tie beams support V-shaped arrangements of diagonal struts. These timbers are similar to those supported on the shoulders of a king strut, though here the vertical king strut is missing. Although more substantial, they are also similar to raking struts, though meet in the middle of the tie beam, rather than sit separately toward each end of it (Alcock *et al.* 1999, G18, fig 8). Similarly, they are like V-struts, but much larger (Brunskill 1994, 181).

As the diagonal struts carry bark and are largely in the round they appear to have

not been finished. Also, although it is clear that the eastern barn was the earlier and the western was built against it (see above), the roof covers both continuously without any distinct break. Moreover, there is no obvious outlet through the roof for the chimney of the hearth in the western barn. Therefore, it would appear that the roofs of these buildings have been altered at least once or twice. It may be, therefore, that these unusual roof trusses were an ad hoc creation at some point when the buildings were joined or later altered.

## 7. CONCLUSION

Archaeological investigations were undertaken at 37 High Street, Ropsley, as the site lay within the core of the medieval village and development affected a historic building.

The watching brief identified natural deposits, an undated pit and dumped deposit (perhaps indicating industrial activity), an undated former topsoil and make-up deposit and post-medieval foundation trenches to standing structures (see below). Finds retrieved during the investigation comprised tap slag from iron smelting.

Recording of the buildings has indicated that the eastern structure is the earlier of the two, though both are probably 18<sup>th</sup> century. Details of the features and fittings suggest they both served an agricultural function as chaff houses for the storage and processing of fodder. A brick hearth in the western building is a later, perhaps 19<sup>th</sup> century, insertion that probably heated a boiler for a steam engine that drove a chopping machine.

The roof trusses in both buildings are closely comparable, but usual and do not conform to any standard pattern. In style they are most similar to a king strut truss, but lack the central king strut. It seems

likely that they are an ad hoc construction inserted at some point when the roofs of the two buildings were altered.

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wish to acknowledge the assistance of Mr R. Cooper for commissioning the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor who edited this report along with Tom Lane. The South Kesteven Community Archaeologist kindly allowed access to the parish files and library maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

## 9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Gary Taylor  
 Site Supervisors: Jim Snee, Gary Taylor  
 Finds processing: Denise Buckley  
 Photographic reproduction: Sue Unsworth  
 Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner, David Hopkins  
 Post-excavation analysis: Paul Cope-Faulkner, Gary Taylor

## 10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alcock, N. W., Barley, M. W., Dixon, P. W. and Meeson, R. A., 1999, *Recording Timber-Framed Buildings: An Illustrated Glossary*, CBA Practical Handbooks in Archaeology 5
- Barnwell, P. S. and Giles, C., 1997, *English Farmsteads, 1750-1914*, RCHME
- Brunskill, R. W., 1994, *Timber Buildings in Britain* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed)
- Brunskill, R. W., 1999, *Traditional Farm Buildings of Britain and their Conservation* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed, retitled)

Cameron, K., 1998, *A Dictionary of Lincolnshire Place Names*, English Place-Name Society popular Series No. 1

Foster, C.W., and Longley, T., 1976, *The Lincolnshire Domesday and the Lindsey Survey*, The Lincoln Record Society 19

GSGB, 1972, *Bourne; Drift edition*, 1:63360 map sheet 143

Hall, R., 2000, *Archaeological Watching Brief of Development on land adjacent to 10 School Lane, Ropsley, Lincolnshire (RSL 99)*, unpublished APS report 105/99

Hodge, C.A.H., Burton R.G.O., Corbett, W.M., Evans, R. and Seale, R.S., 1984, *Soils and their Use in Eastern England*, Soil Survey of England and Wales 13

IFA, 1999a, *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

IFA, 1999b, *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures*

Lane, T.W., 1995, *The Archaeology and Developing Landscape of Ropsley and Humby, Lincolnshire*, Lincolnshire Archaeology and Heritage Reports Series No. 2

Pevsner, N. and Harris, J., 1989, *Lincolnshire The Buildings of England* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition, revised Antram, N.)

RCHME, 1996, *Recording Historic Buildings: a descriptive specification*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition

Taylor, H.M. and Taylor, J., 1980, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture Vol. II*

## 11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services

GSGB Geological Survey of Great  
Britain

IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

RCHME Royal Commission on the Historic  
Monuments of England

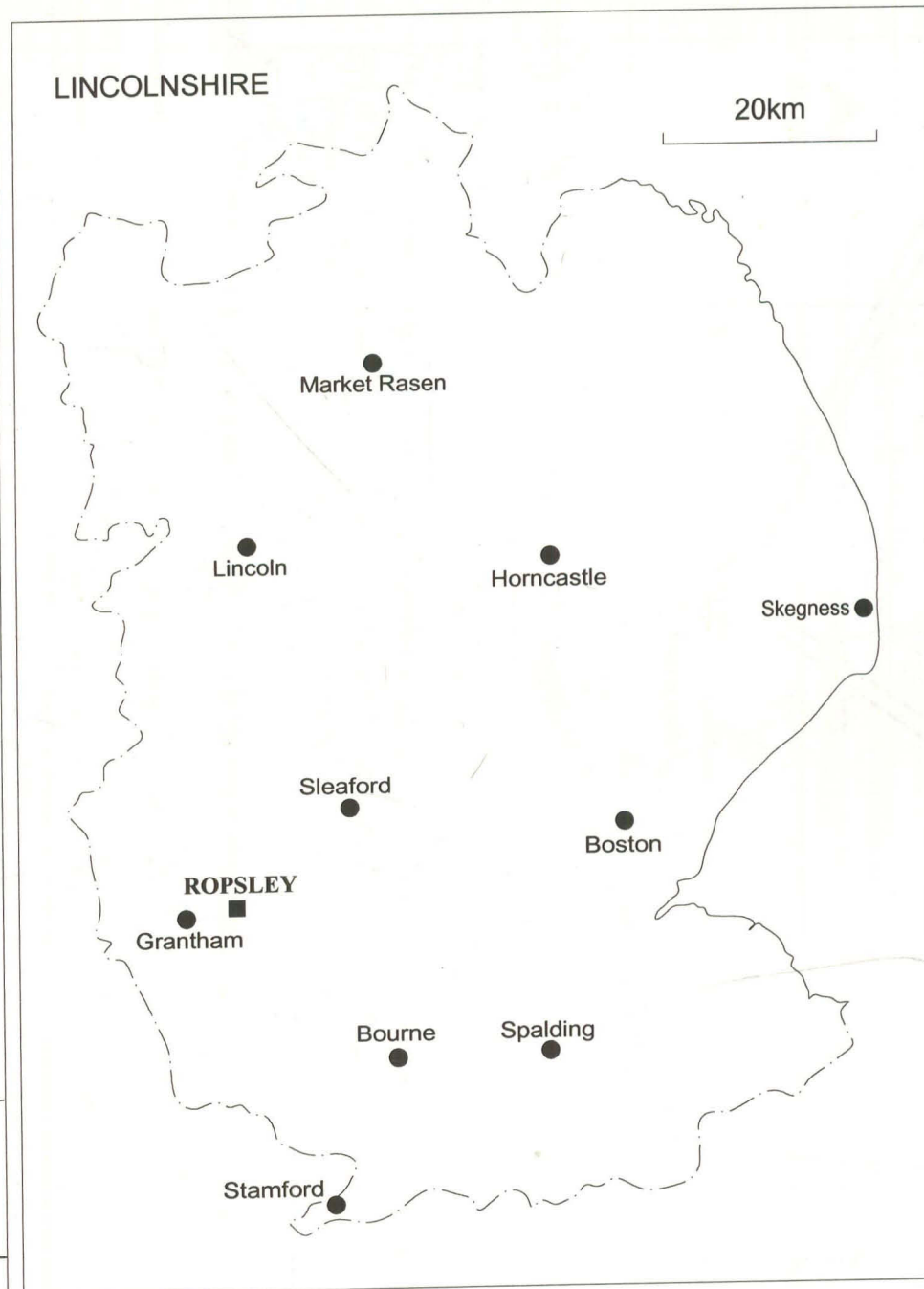
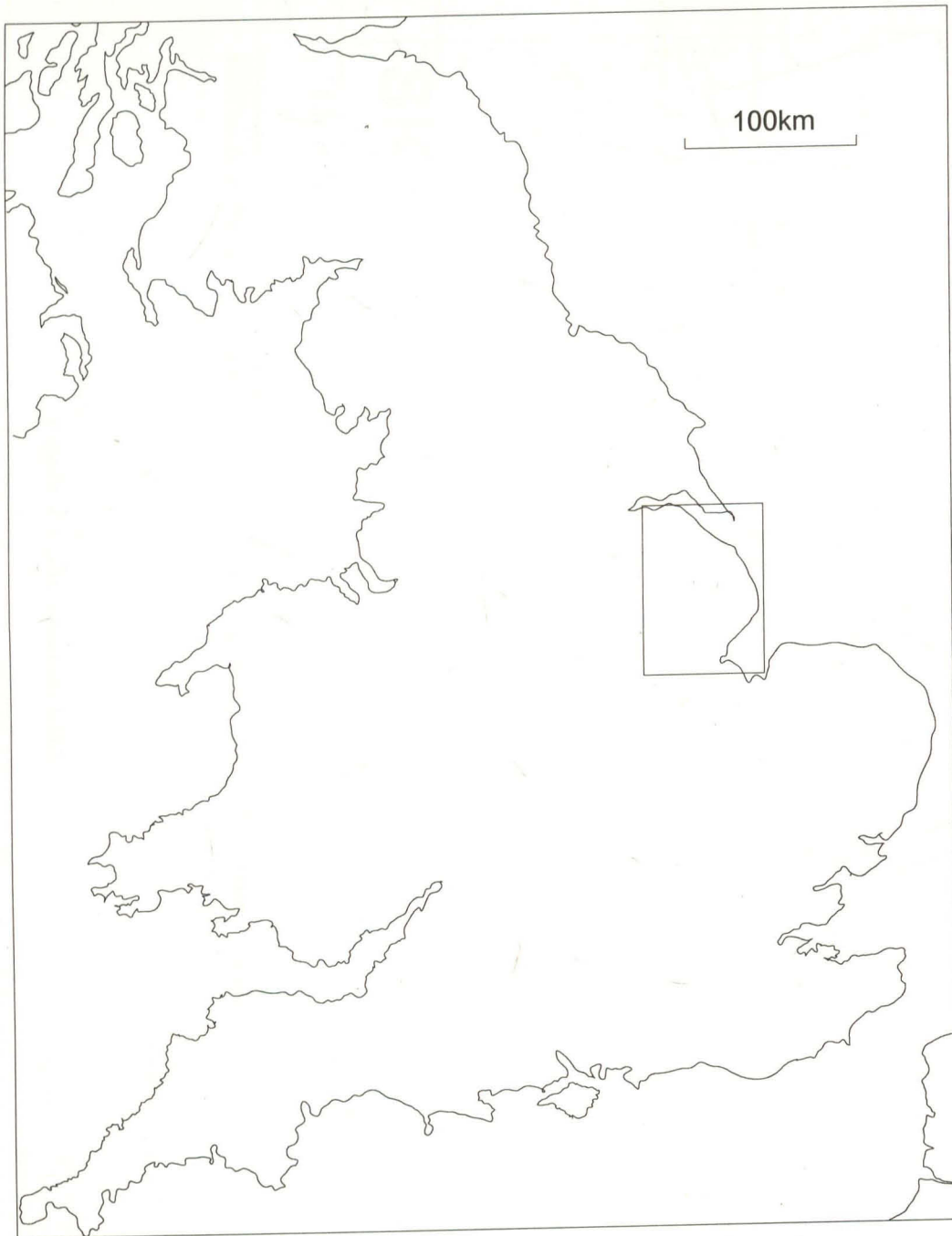
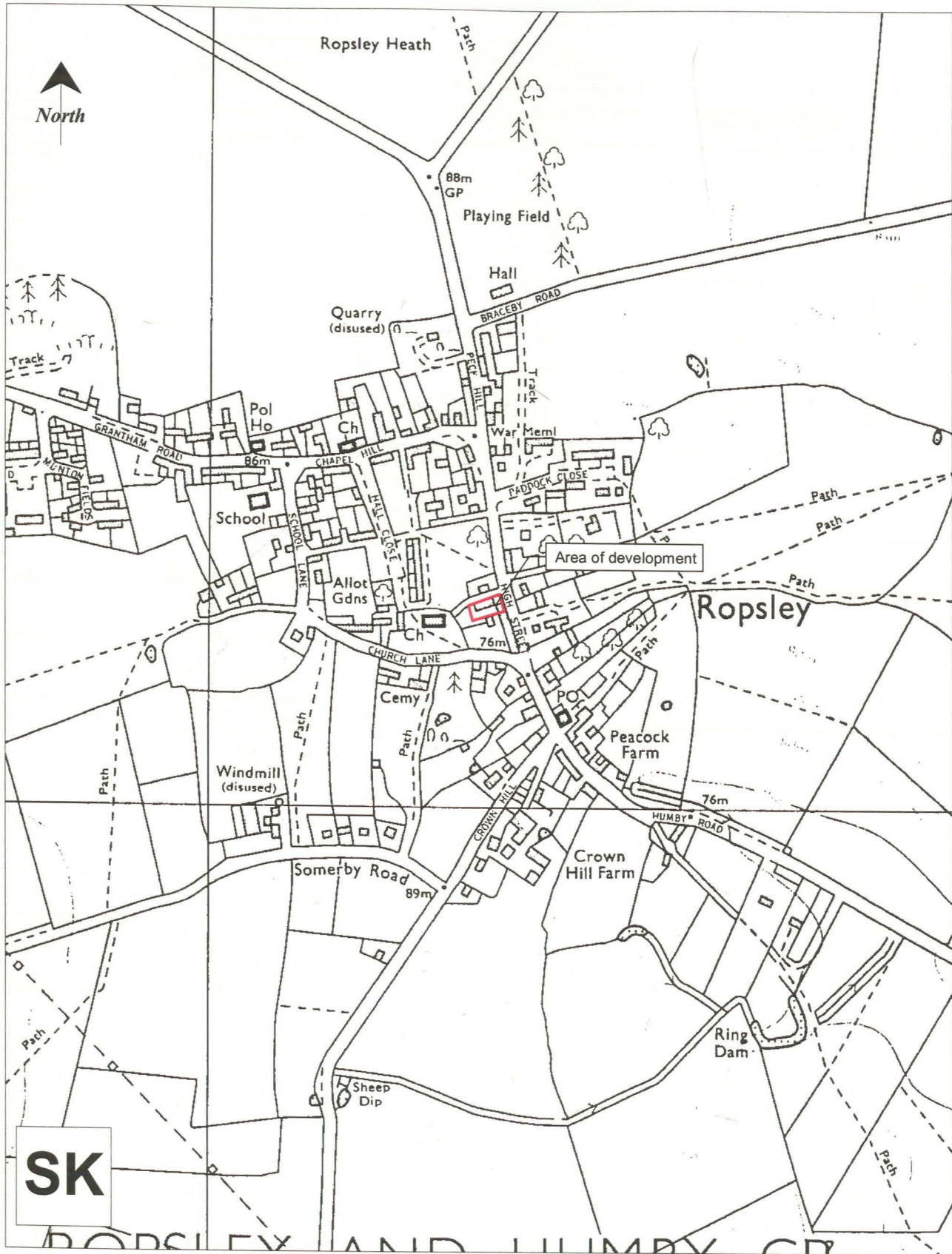


Figure 1 - General Location Plan



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1:10,000 map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright. HTL LTD Licence No AL6041A0001

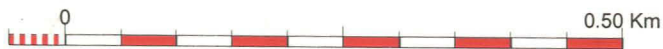


Figure 2 - Site location plan

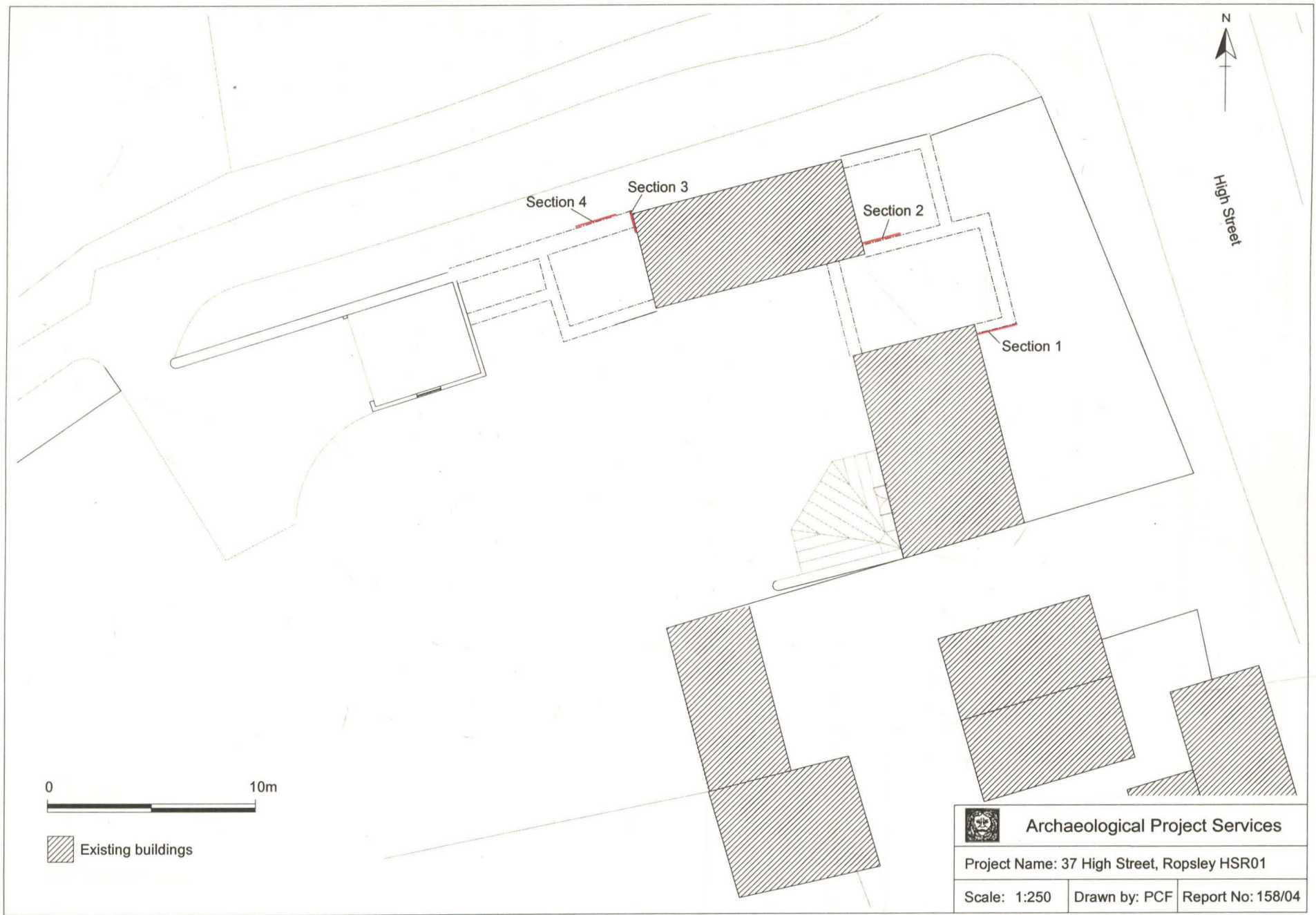
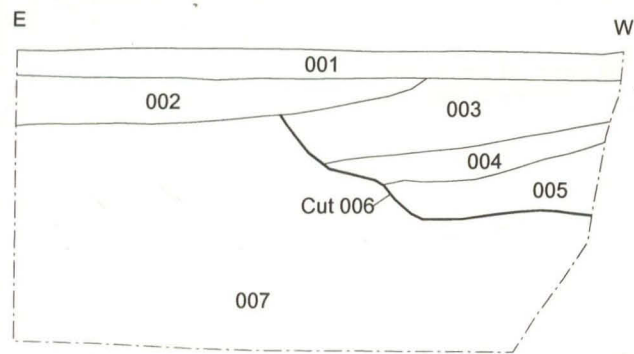
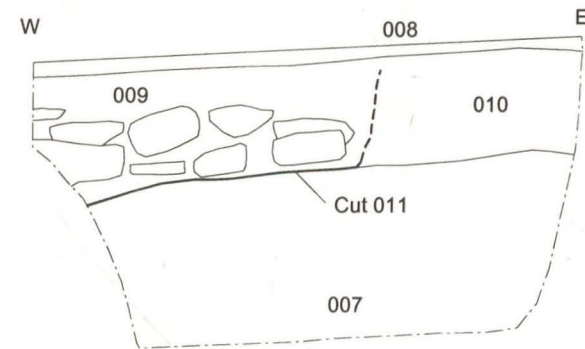


Figure 3 - Plan of the development showing section locations

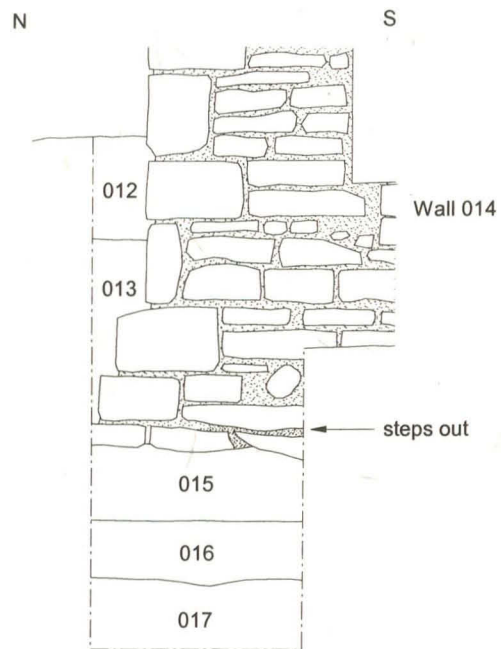




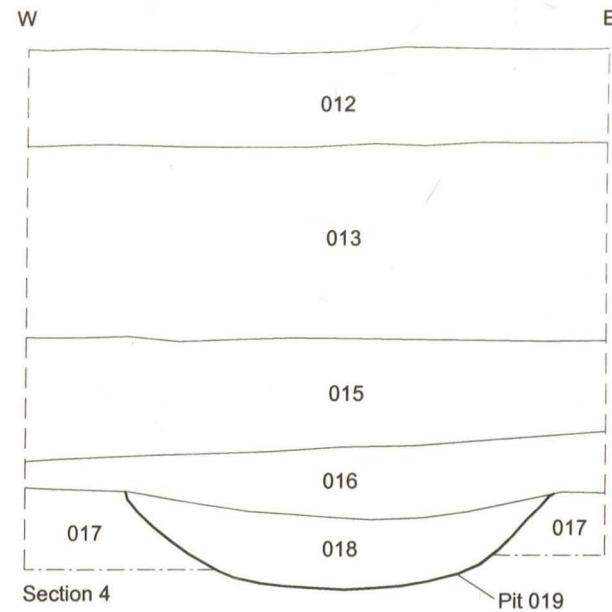
Section 1



Section 2



Section 3



Section 4



Archaeological Project Services

Project Name: 37 High Street, Ropsley HSR03

Scale: 1:25

Drawn by: PCF

Report No: 158/04

Figure 4 - Sections 1 to 4

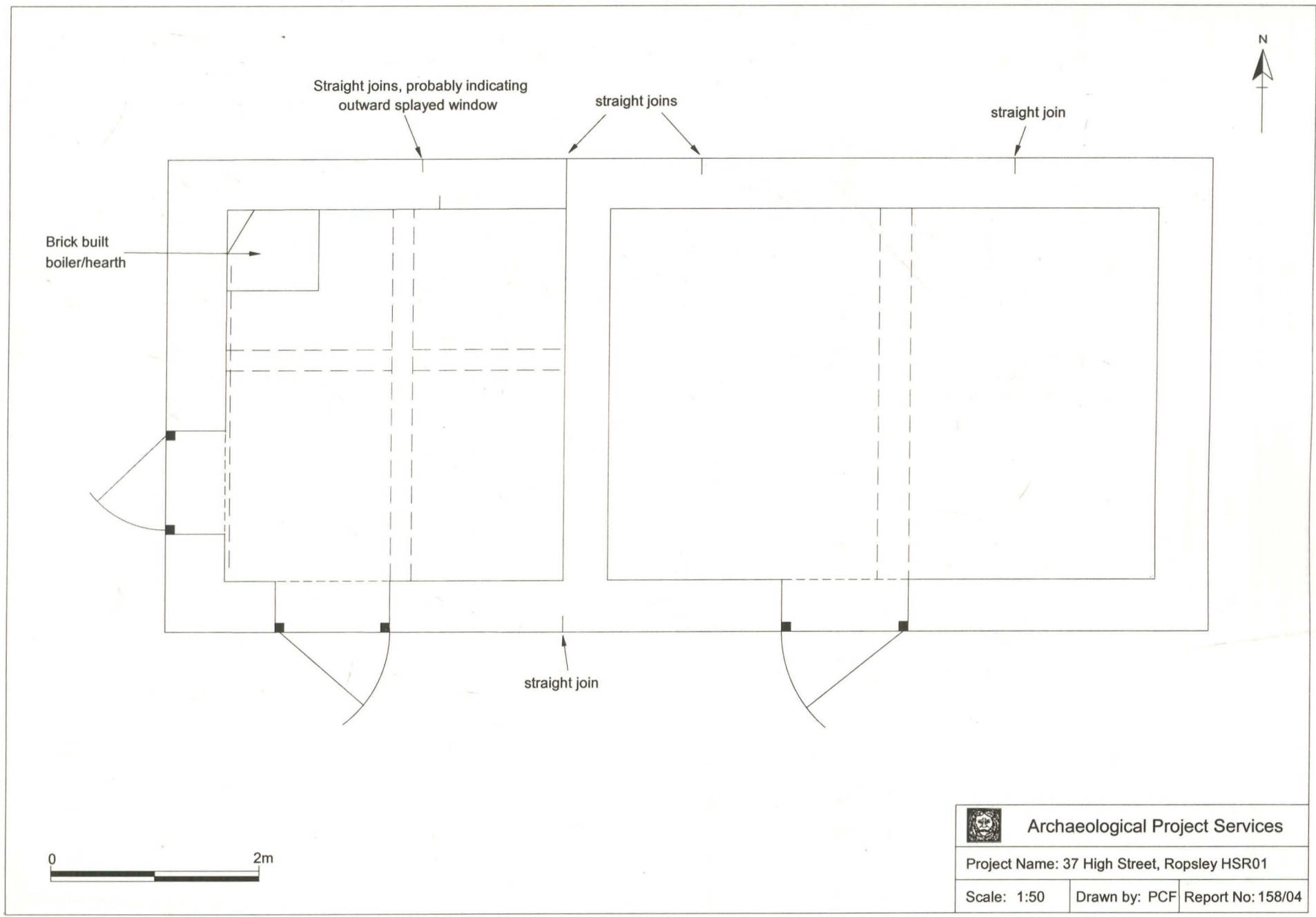
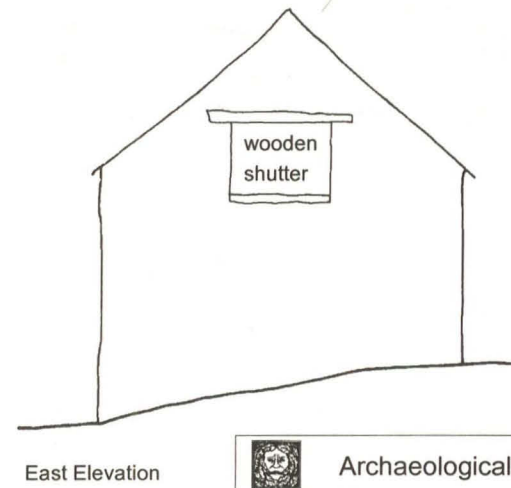
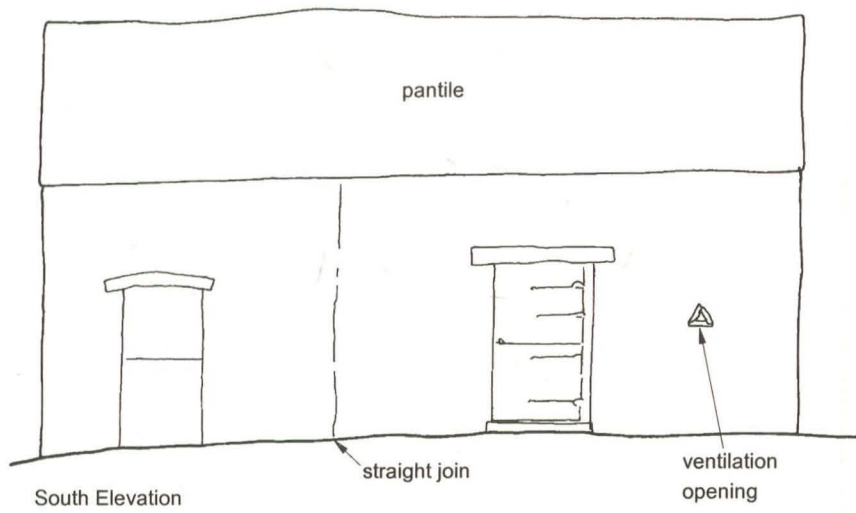
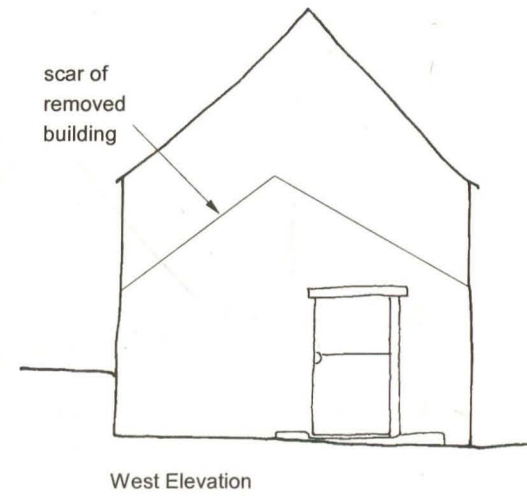
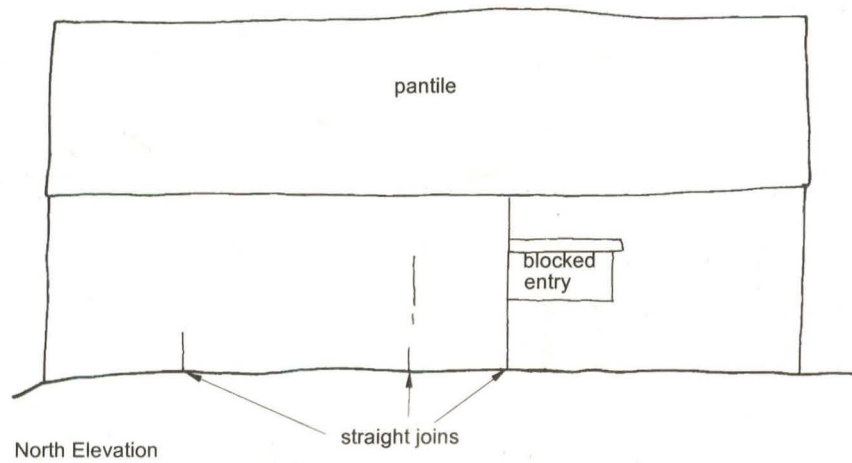


Figure 5 - Ground plan of the two recorded barns




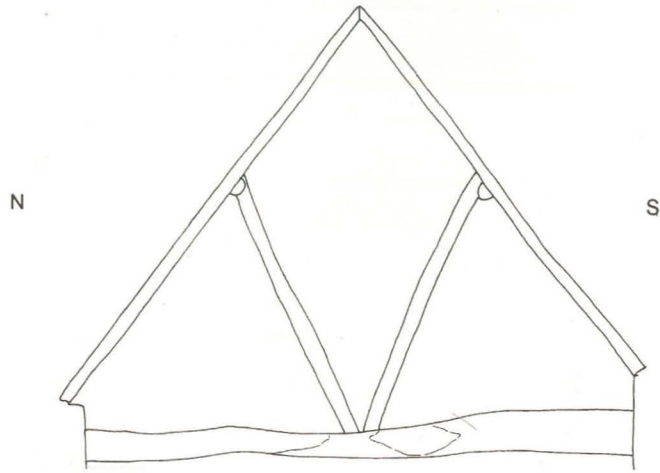
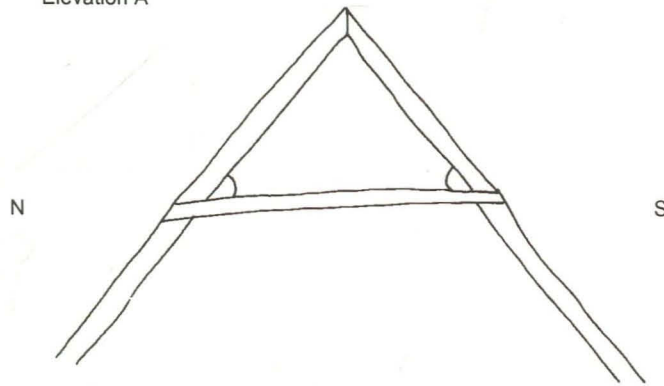
|  |              |                   |
|--|--------------|-------------------|
|  <b>Archaeological Project Services</b> |              |                   |
| Project Name: 37 High Street, Ropsley HSR01  |              |                   |
| Scale: 1:100   | Drawn by: DH | Report No: 158/04 |

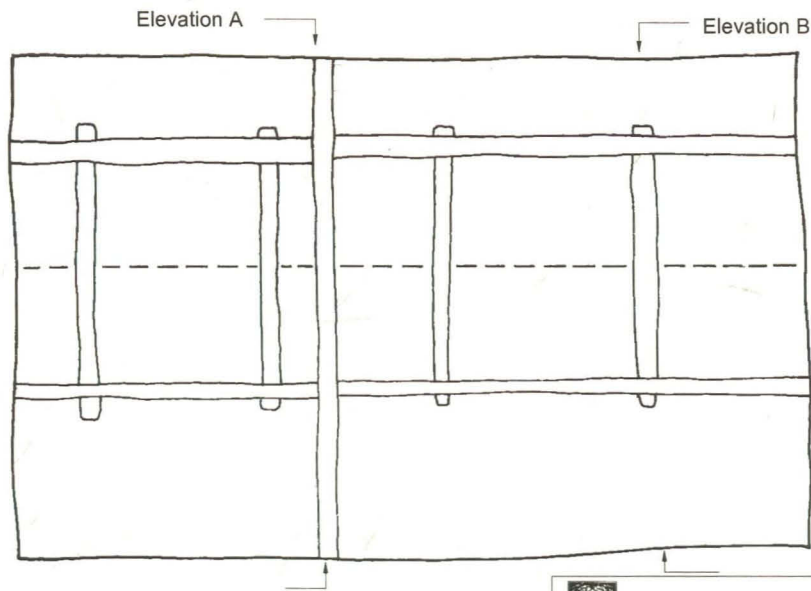
Figure 6 - Exterior elevations of the barns



Elevation A



Elevation B (sketch)



Archaeological Project Services

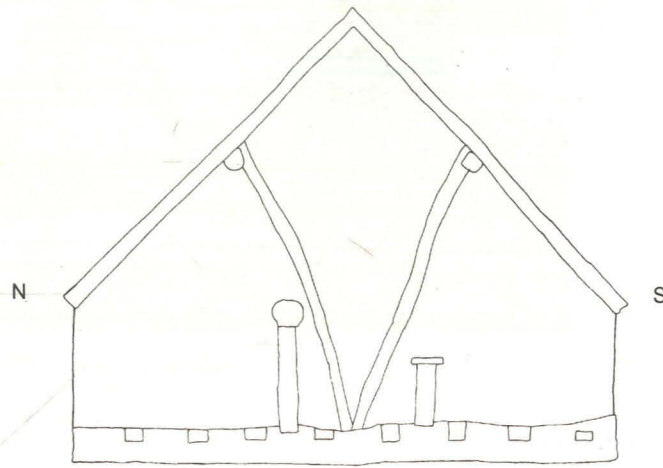
Project Name: 37 High Street, Ropsley HSR01

Scale 1:50

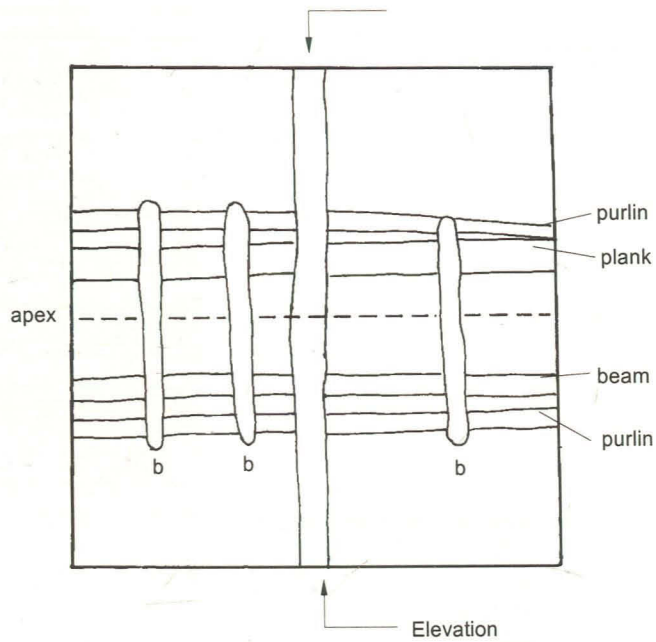
Drawn by: DH

Report No: 158/04

Figure 7 - Roof arrangement, East Barn



Elevation



b = braces



Archaeological Project Services

Project Name: 37 High Street, Ropsley HSR01

Scale 1:50

Drawn by: DH

Report No: 158/04

Figure 8 - Roof arrangement, West barn



Plate 1 - View of the development, looking west



Plate 2 - Section 3, looking east



Plate 3 - Section 4, looking north



Plate 4 - View showing the barns from the northwest, showing the join between the two and the scar outline of a further outhouse



Plate 5 - View of the barns from the southwest



Plate 6 - View showing roof trusses in the eastern barn



Plate 7 - View showing the roof trusses in the western barn



## Appendix 1

### LAND AT 37 HIGH STREET, ROPSLEY, LINCOLNSHIRE - SPECIFICATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AND BUILDING RECORDING

#### 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 *A watching brief and building recording is required during development works to extend and alter a house at 37 High Street, Ropsley, Lincolnshire.*
- 1.2 *The area is archaeologically sensitive, lying in the centre of the village, an area settled from the Saxon period, with Late Saxon-medieval remains found close by. Additionally, the barn at the site has roof beams of historic interest.*
- 1.3 *Historic building recording will take place prior to the barn conversion. 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 results of the investigation. The report will consist of a narrative supported by illustrations and photographs.*

#### 2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This document comprises a specification for building recording and an archaeological watching brief during groundworks connected with extension and alteration of a house at 37 High Street, Ropsley, Lincolnshire, National Grid Reference SK 9932 3432.
- 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 Ropsley is located 7km east of Grantham in the South Kesteven district of Lincolnshire. The site is in the centre of the village, adjacent to the church on the west side of Main Street at National Grid Reference SK 9932 3432.

#### 4 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 4.1 A planning application (S01/0001/65) was submitted to South Kesteven District Council for the proposed extension and alterations to a house. Permission is subject to a condition requiring the implementation of an archaeological watching brief during groundworks and building recording prior to conversion of a barn.

#### 5 SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 5.1 The site is in a northwest-southeast trending valley, at a height of c. 80m OD. Local soils are the Elmton 1 Association typical brown rendzinas with smaller areas of deeper brown calcareous earths developed on Jurassic Upper Lincolnshire limestone (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 179).

#### 6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

- 6.1 Ropsley has been the subject of detailed archaeological study, with sites of prehistoric and later

date found across the parish (Lane 1995). The site is in the medieval core of the village, adjacent to the parish church. The church contains Anglo-Saxon architectural fabric and the settlement was in existence before the Norman conquest. The church would have provided the settlement focus in the Late Saxon and medieval periods and there is evidence of settlement of these periods close by.

- 6.2 The barn at the site has an interior of historic interest, with a roof truss in a King Post-style arrangement, but without the King Post.

## 7 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 7.1 The aims of the investigation will be:

7.1.1 To record and interpret the historic building fabric and archaeological features exposed during the excavation of the foundation trenches and other areas of ground disturbance.

- 7.2 The objectives of the investigation will be to:

7.2.1 Prepare a record of the historic fabric of the barn, prior to conversion;

7.2.2 Determine the form and function of the archaeological features encountered during groundwork or building recording;

7.2.3 Determine the spatial arrangement of the archaeological features encountered during groundwork or building recording;

7.2.4 As far as practicable, recover dating evidence from the archaeological features during groundwork or building recording, and

7.2.5 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 (IFA), under the management of a Member of the institute (MIFA). Archaeological Project Services is IFA registered organisation no. 21.

8.1.3 Any and all artefacts found during the investigation and thought to be 'treasure', as defined by the Treasure Act 1996, will be removed from site to a secure store and promptly reported to the appropriate coroner's office.

### 8.2 Methodology

8.2.1 The building recording will be undertaken prior to the barn conversion and will be undertaken to Level I standard of Royal Commission guidelines (RCHME 1996).

8.2.2 The building recording will include the production of a dimensioned plan and elevation of the floors and roof truss, together with a photographic record of the roof timbering arrangement, and general interior and exterior views of the barn. A written descriptive record of the building will also be made.

8.2.3 The watching brief will be undertaken during the ground works phase of development, and includes the archaeological monitoring of all phases of soil movement.

8.2.4 Stripped areas and trench sections will be observed regularly to identify and record archaeological features that are exposed and to record changes in the geological conditions. The section drawings of the trenches will be recorded at a scale of 1:10.

Should features be recorded in plan these will be drawn at a scale of 1:20. Written descriptions detailing the nature of the deposits, features and fills encountered will be compiled on Archaeological Project Services pro-forma record sheets.

- 8.2.5 Any finds recovered will be bagged and labelled for later analysis.
- 8.2.6 Throughout the watching brief a photographic record will be compiled. The photographic record will consist of:
  - 8.2.6.1 the site during work to show specific stages, and the layout of the archaeology within the trench.
  - 8.2.6.2 groups of features where their relationship is important
- 8.2.7 Should human remains be located they will be left *in situ* and only excavated if absolutely necessary. Should removal be required the appropriate Home Office licence will be obtained before the exhumation of the remains. In addition, the Local Environmental Health Department, coroner and the police will be informed, where appropriate.

## 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 and 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 non-technical summary of the results of the investigation.
  - 9.3.2.2 Details of the archaeological setting of the investigation site.
  - 9.3.2.3 Details of the topography of the site.
  - 9.3.2.4 Description of the methodologies used during the investigation.
  - 9.3.2.5 A text describing the findings of the investigation.
  - 9.3.2.6 A consideration of the local, regional and national context of the investigation

findings.

9.3.2.7 Plans, sections and elevations of the building and roof truss, and detailed drawings of the roof truss, if appropriate.

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

9.3.2.9 Sections of the trenches and archaeological features.

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

9.3.2.11 Specialist reports on the finds from the site.

9.3.2.12 Appropriate photographs of the building and roof truss, and the site and specific archaeological features.

## 10 REPORT DEPOSITION

10.1 Copies of the report will be sent to the client; the South Kesteven Community Archaeologist; South Kesteven District Council Planning Department; and to the County Council Archaeological Sites and Monuments Record.

## 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 presented to the editor of the journal *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 South Kesteven Community Archaeologist. They will be given written notice of the commencement of the project.

## 14 VARIATIONS AND CONTINGENCIES

14.1 Variations to the proposed scheme of works will only be made following written confirmation of acceptance from the archaeological curator.

14.2 In the event of the discovery of any unexpected remains of archaeological importance, or of any changed circumstances, it is the responsibility of the archaeological contractor to inform the archaeological curator (*Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook* 1998, Sections 5.7 and 18).

14.3 Where important archaeological remains are discovered and deemed to merit further investigation additional resources may be required to provide an appropriate level of investigation, recording and analysis.

14.4 Any contingency requirement for additional fieldwork or post-excavation analysis outside the scope of the proposed scheme of works will only be activated following full consultation with the archaeological curator and the client.

15 PROGRAMME OF WORKS AND STAFFING LEVELS

- 15.1 The building recording and watching brief fieldwork will be undertaken concurrently, where it is possible to do so. Additionally, the watching brief will be integrated with the programme of construction and is dependent on the developers' work programme. It is therefore not possible to specify the person-hours for the archaeological site work.
- 15.2 An archaeological supervisor with experience of building recording and 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 person-day) will require a post- excavation day (equal to one-and-a-half person-days) for completion of the analysis and report. If the fieldwork lasts longer than about four days then there will be an economy of scale with the post-excavation analysis.

16 SPECIALISTS TO BE USED DURING THE PROJECT

- 16.1 The following organisations/persons will, in principle 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<br>Roman - B Precious, Independent Specialist<br>Anglo-Saxon - J Young, Independent Specialist<br>Medieval and later - G Taylor in consultation with H Healey, Independent Archaeologist |
| Non-pottery Artefacts  | J Cowgill, Independent Specialist  |
| Animal Bones           | Environmental Archaeology Consultancy  |
| Environmental Analysis | J Rackham, Independent Specialist  |
| Human Remains Analysis | R Gowland, Independent Specialist  |

17 INSURANCES

- 17.1 Archaeological Project Services, as part of the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire, maintains Employers Liability Insurance of ,10,000,000, together with Public and Products Liability insurances, each with indemnity of ,5,000,000. Copies of insurance documentation can be supplied on request.

18 COPYRIGHT

- 18.1 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.

- 18.2 Licence will also be given to the archaeological curators to use the documentary archive for educational, public and research purposes.
- 18.3 In the case of non-satisfactory settlement of account then copyright will remain fully and exclusively with Archaeological Project Services. In these circumstances it will be an infringement under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 for the client to pass any report, partial report, or copy of same, to any third party. Reports submitted in good faith by Archaeological Project Services to any Planning Authority or archaeological curator will be removed from said planning Authority and/or archaeological curator. The Planning Authority and/or archaeological curator will be notified by Archaeological Project Services that the use of any such information previously supplied constitutes an infringement under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 and may result in legal action.
- 18.4 The author of any report or specialist contribution to a report shall retain intellectual copyright of their work and may make use of their work for educational or research purposes or for further publication.

## 19 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

Lane, TW, 1995 *The Archaeology and Developing Landscape of Ropsley and Humby, Lincolnshire*

RCHME, 1996 *Recording Historic Buildings, A Descriptive Specification* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed)

Specification: Version 1, 21-06-01

## Appendix 2

### CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

| No. | Description  | Interpretation     |
|-----|--|--------------------|
| 001 | Indurated light grey concrete, 100mm thick   | Path               |
| 002 | Loose mid to dark yellowish brown silty sand, 0.15m thick  | Former topsoil     |
| 003 | Firm mid to dark brownish grey calcareous gravel and clayey grit                                   | Fill of (006)      |
| 004 | Firm mid brown sandy clay with limestone   | Fill of (006)      |
| 005 | Firm mid yellowish brown gritty sand   | Fill of (006)      |
| 006 | Feature, 1.1m wide by 0.45m deep, irregular stepped and concave sides with flattish base           | Foundation trench  |
| 007 | Firm light greyish yellow limestone, >0.8m thick   | Natural deposit    |
| 008 | Indurated mid grey concrete, 50mm thick  | Yard surface       |
| 009 | Firm mid to dark greyish brown sandy clay with limestone   | Backfill of (011)  |
| 010 | Firm mid greyish brown sandy clay, 0.35m thick   | Subsoil            |
| 011 | Feature, 1.1m wide by 0.4m deep, steep sides and flattish base                                     | Foundation trench  |
| 012 | Friable dark greyish brown silty sand with limestone, brick/tile fragments and gravel, 0.35m thick | Topsoil            |
| 013 | Firm mid greyish brown silty sand with gravel and limestone, 0.65m thick                           | Make-up deposit    |
| 014 | Limestone structure, rough hewn in random coursing, aligned north-south                            | Wall of barn       |
| 015 | Firm dark greyish brown sandy clay, 0.13m to 0.4m thick  | Former topsoil     |
| 016 | Firm dark greyish brown sandy clay with charcoal, limestone and slag, 0.2m thick                   | Dumped deposit     |
| 017 | Firm dark yellowish brown sandy clay, >0.25m thick   | Subsoil            |
| 018 | Soft black silty clay with frequent charcoal   | Fill of (019)      |
| 019 | Sub-circular feature, 1.4m wide by 0.32m deep, gradual sides with rounded base                     | Pit                |
| 020 | Loose light yellowish brown limestone fragments, 100mm thick                                       | Hardstanding       |
| 021 | Soft dark greyish brown sandy clay, 0.2m thick   | Topsoil            |
| 022 | Firm dark greyish brown sandy clay and light yellow limestone fragments, 100mm thick               | Demolition deposit |

## Appendix 3

### THE FINDS

by Jane Cowgill and Gary Taylor

Three fragments of slag were retrieved during a watching brief at High Street, Ropsley

#### Provenance

The material was recovered from a dumped deposit (016).

#### Range

The range of material is detailed in the tables.

Table 1: The Finds

| Context | Material | Description                 | No. | Wt (g) | Context Date |
|---------|----------|-----------------------------|-----|--------|--------------|
| 016     | Slag     | Tap slag from iron smelting | 3   | 535    |              |

The industrial residue derives from iron production and suggests this activity took place in the vicinity in the past. Although not particularly indicative of date, the slag is likely to be Roman or medieval, but not Saxon. The slag was tapped into deep pits and two of the pieces have impressions of earlier, solidified, slag flows on their undersides.

#### Condition

All the material is in good condition and present no long-term storage problems. Archive storage of the collection is by material class.

#### Documentation

There have been previous archaeological investigations at Ropsley that are the subjects of reports. Additionally, there has been reported study of the archaeological and historical evidence for the village and its vicinity. Details of archaeological sites and discoveries in the area are maintained in the files of the South Kesteven Community Archaeologist and the Lincolnshire County Council Sites and Monuments Record.

#### Potential

The small collection of industrial residue is of moderate local potential and significance. Although dumped, the material is not likely to have been moved far and derives from iron smelting activity. This industrial process probably occurred in the Ropsley locality and the nature of the slag would suggest this was in medieval or earlier times.

The lack of any general occupation debris is informative and suggests that archaeological deposits associated with medieval and post-medieval habitation are absent from the area, or were not disturbed by the development, or were of a nature that did not involve artefact deposition. It is possible that artefacts that normally constitute general refuse discard were not deposited in this area, or were thoroughly cleaned away and removed.



## Appendix 4

### GLOSSARY

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Bronze Age</b>      | A period characterised by the introduction of bronze into the country for tools, between 2250 and 800 BC.   |
| <b>Chaff House</b>     | Room for storage of animal fodder.  |
| <b>Collar</b>          | Transverse horizontal timber connecting pairs of rafters above their feet and below the apex of the roof.   |
| <b>Context</b>         | 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 interpretations of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, e.g.(004). |
| <b>Cut</b>             | A cut refers to the physical action of digging a posthole, pit, ditch, foundation trench, etc. Once the fills of these features are removed during an archaeological investigation the original 'cut' is therefore exposed and subsequently recorded.   |
| <b>Dumped deposits</b> | 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.  |
| <b>Dutch door</b>      | Door divided horizontally in two, so that the upper and lower halves can be opened and closed independently of the other.   |
| <b>Fill</b>            | 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).  |
| <b>King strut</b>      | Vertical timber standing on a collar ( <i>q.v.</i> ) or tie beam ( <i>q.v.</i> ) and rising to the apex of a roof with a ridge piece.   |
| <b>Layer</b>           | A layer is a term to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.   |
| <b>Medieval</b>        | The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.  |
| <b>Natural</b>         | Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity.  |
| <b>Neolithic</b>       | The 'New Stone Age' period, part of the prehistoric era, dating from approximately 4500-2250 BC.  |
| <b>Pannage</b>         | Right given to the owners of pigs to go into a wood and to allow the pigs to eat the acorns or beech mast which <i>fall to the ground</i> .   |
| <b>Pitching hole</b>   | Unglazed, shuttered window-like hole at first floor level to ease unloading of an unprocessed crop into the building from a cart outside.   |
| <b>Post-medieval</b>   | The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.   |

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <b>Prehistoric</b>    | The period of human history prior to the introduction of writing. In Britain the prehistoric period lasts from the first evidence of human occupation about 500,000 BC, until the Roman invasion in the middle of the 1 <sup>st</sup> century AD.                                       |
| <b>Purlin</b>         | Longitudinal timber giving support to the rafters of a roof. A clasped purlin is one held between collar ( <i>q.v.</i> ) and rafter.  |
| <b>Raking strut</b>   | Paired struts set at an angle to the tie beam ( <i>q.v.</i> ) and framed into the rafter. May support a purlin ( <i>q.v.</i> )  |
| <b>Romano-British</b> | Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.  |
| <b>Saxon</b>          | Pertaining to the period dating from AD 410-1066 when England was largely settled by tribes from northern Germany.  |
| <b>Tie beam</b>       | Main transverse beam in a roof truss connecting the feet of the principal rafter and preventing the spreading of the two sides of a sloping roof. A <i>dropped tie beam</i> is one set below wall plate level (the top of the walls), often to increase head room within the roofspace. |
| <b>V-strut</b>        | Inclined struts meeting at the base like a letter V. Usually found in the upper part of a roof truss resting on a collar ( <i>q.v.</i> ) and rising to meet the rafters.  |

## Appendix 5

### THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

|    |                           |
|----|---------------------------|
| 22 | Context records           |
| 9  | Drawing sheets            |
| 1  | Photographic record sheet |
| 1  | Stratigraphic matrix      |
| 1  | Bag of finds              |

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: 2001.163

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: HSR 01

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.

Archaeological Project Services  
The Old School • Cameron Street • Heckington • Sleaford • Lincs • NG34 9RW  
Tel. (01529) 461618 • Fax (01529) 469444 • Email. [info@apsarchaeology.co.uk](mailto:info@apsarchaeology.co.uk)

Archaeological Project Services is part of the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire, a company limited by guarantee  
and a registered charity. Charity No: 1001463 • Company No: 2554738 (England).