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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
ON LAND AT  
STAINFIELD,  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
(STNG 10)**

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**Work Undertaken For  
Lincolnshire County Council**

March 2010

Report Compiled by  
Paul Cope-Faulkner BA (Hons)

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APS Report No. **23/10**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
PROJECT  
SERVICES**

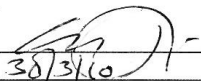





## Quality Control

Archaeological Watching Brief  
During installation of a gate at  
Stainfield Nunnery  
Stainfield  
Lincolnshire  
STNG 10

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Supervisor	Chris Moulis
Finds Processing	Denise Buckley
Illustration	Paul Cope-Faulkner
Photographic Reproduction	Sue Unsworth
Post-excavation Analyst	Paul Cope-Faulkner

Checked by Project Manager	Approved by Senior Archaeologist
 Gary Taylor	 Tom Lane
Date: 30/3/10	Date: 30.3.10



## Table of Contents

### List of Figures

### List of Plates

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

### Appendices

1. Context descriptions
2. The Finds *by Anne Boyle and Paul Cope-Faulkner*
3. Glossary
4. The Archive

## **List of Figures**

- Figure 1      General location plan
- Figure 2      Site location plan
- Figure 3      Detailed site location plan, superimposed on 1887 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map
- Figure 4      Plan and section

## **List of Plates**

- Plate 1      View looking south towards the area of works
- Plate 2      Installation of the kissing gate

## 1. SUMMARY

*A watching brief was undertaken during groundworks at Stainfield, Lincolnshire. The watching brief monitored the excavation of pits for a new kissing gate.*

*A Bronze Age (2200-800 BC) barrow cemetery is known from the north of the parish. The site sits within a Scheduled Ancient Monument, the medieval (AD 1066-1540) earthworks of a Benedictine priory, established for nuns in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, and also adjacent to the deserted village of Stainfield. Furthermore, these earthworks are overlain by a post-medieval formal garden.*

*The watching brief revealed a demolition deposit, probably associated with one of the former priory buildings, overlain by modern topsoil. Finds retrieved from the investigation comprise late medieval brick and tile, stone and oyster shell.*

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Definition of a Watching Brief

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 may be disturbed or destroyed.*” (IFA 1999).

### 2.2 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Lincolnshire County Council to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the installation of a new kissing gate at Stainfield, Lincolnshire. Scheduled Monument Consent was granted for the works. The watching brief

was carried out on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2010 in accordance with a specification prepared by Archaeological Project Services (Appendix 1) and approved by English Heritage.

### 2.3 Topography and Geology

Stainfield is located 12km east of Lincoln and 15km west of Horncastle in the administrative district of West Lindsey, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The site is 60m southwest of the parish church of St Andrew at National Grid Reference TF 1116 7315 (Figs. 2 and 3). The site lies to the west of Stainfield Hall at a height of c. 6m OD within the valley of the Stainfield Beck.

Locals soils are of the Fladbury 2 Association, typically pelo-alluvial gley soils, within the valley, with Beccles 1 Association, stagnogley soils, to the south and north (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 119, 196). These soils overlie a drift geology of river terrace sand and gravel that seals a solid geology of Jurassic Oxford Clay (BGS 1973).

### 2.4 Archaeological Setting

Stainfield lies in an area of known archaeological remains dating from the Bronze Age to the present day. Located to the north of the village an extensive barrow cemetery emerging from a peat cover has been identified from aerial photographs (Everson and Hayes 1984, 36). Approximately 28 barrows have so far been identified. An Early Bronze Age axe hammer is also known from the parish.

Stainfield is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of c. 1086. Referred to as *Stainfelde* the name is derived from the Old English *stān* and *feld*, and means a stony field (Cameron 1998, 116). At the time of the Domesday Survey the land was held by William de Perci and contained 60 acres of meadow and 381 acres of

woodland for pannage (Foster and Longley 1976). The subsequent Lindsey Survey of c. 1115 indicates that Bishop Ranulf of Durham held some land (*ibid.*), although Stainfield was part of the de Percy fee during the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

The site lies within the earthworks of Stainfield priory, a Scheduled Ancient Monument (County No. SM22608). The priory was founded by either William or Henry de Percy before 1154, and was the only house for Benedictine nuns in Lincolnshire (Page 1988, 131).

The earthworks also include part of the former village of Stainfield, which was shifted to the south of the priory after the monastery was founded. The earthworks are regularly spaced and suggest a planned 12<sup>th</sup> century village (Everson *et al.* 1991, 175).

Following the dissolution of Stainfield priory in 1536, the land passed to the Tyrwhitt family. During the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the area was emparked (made into a park) and the village and priory cleared to make way for formal gardens which surrounded Stainfield Hall (*ibid.* 176).

Nothing survives of the original Stainfield Hall, the current building of that name dating to 1856. The parish church was also rebuilt in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Pevsner and Harris 1989, 683).

### 3. AIMS

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

### 4. METHODS

Four new pits (Fig. 4) for the kissing gate were dug by hand to a depth of 0.45m

below the current ground level. Following excavation, the sides of the pits were cleaned and rendered vertical. Selected deposits were excavated further to retrieve artefactual material and to determine their function. Each deposit was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and their descriptions appears as Appendix 1. A photographic record was compiled and a section was drawn at a scale of 1:10. Recording was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services practice.

Following excavation finds were examined and a period date assigned where possible (Appendix 2). The records were also checked and a stratigraphic matrix produced. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them and supplemented by artefact dating.

## 5. RESULTS

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

The earliest deposit encountered at the base of the stripped area was a dumped layer of brown sandy silt containing fragments of late medieval brick, tile, building stone and mortar (002). This deposit measured in excess of 0.3m thick (Fig. 4).

Sealing the demolition deposit was the current topsoil of brown sandy silt (001) that was 0.25m thick.

## 6. DISCUSSION

No natural deposits were encountered during the watching brief. A demolition layer containing late medieval brick and tile probably derives from the destruction



of the monastery in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, they imply that a building relating to the monastery probably stood in close proximity to the works. The nature of this building could not be determined. Other finds include stone quarried from Barnack which is also likely to be associated with the nunnery, and an oyster shell.

## 7. CONCLUSION

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at Stainfield, as the site lies within a Scheduled Ancient Monument (no. 22608), which encompasses the precinct of a medieval monastery, a deserted medieval village and post-medieval formal gardens.

A demolition layer containing late medieval brick and tile suggests a building associated with the priory was in the vicinity of the works. This was sealed by the current topsoil.

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Mr N Chester, Assistant Highways Officer, Lincolnshire County Council for commissioning the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor who edited this report along with Tom Lane. Dave Start kindly allowed access to the parish files and library maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

## 9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Gary Taylor  
 Site Supervisor: Chris Moulis  
 Finds processing: Denise Buckley  
 Photographic reproduction: Sue Unsworth  
 Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner  
 Post-excavation analysis: Paul Cope-

Faulkner

## 10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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## 11. ABBREVIATIONS

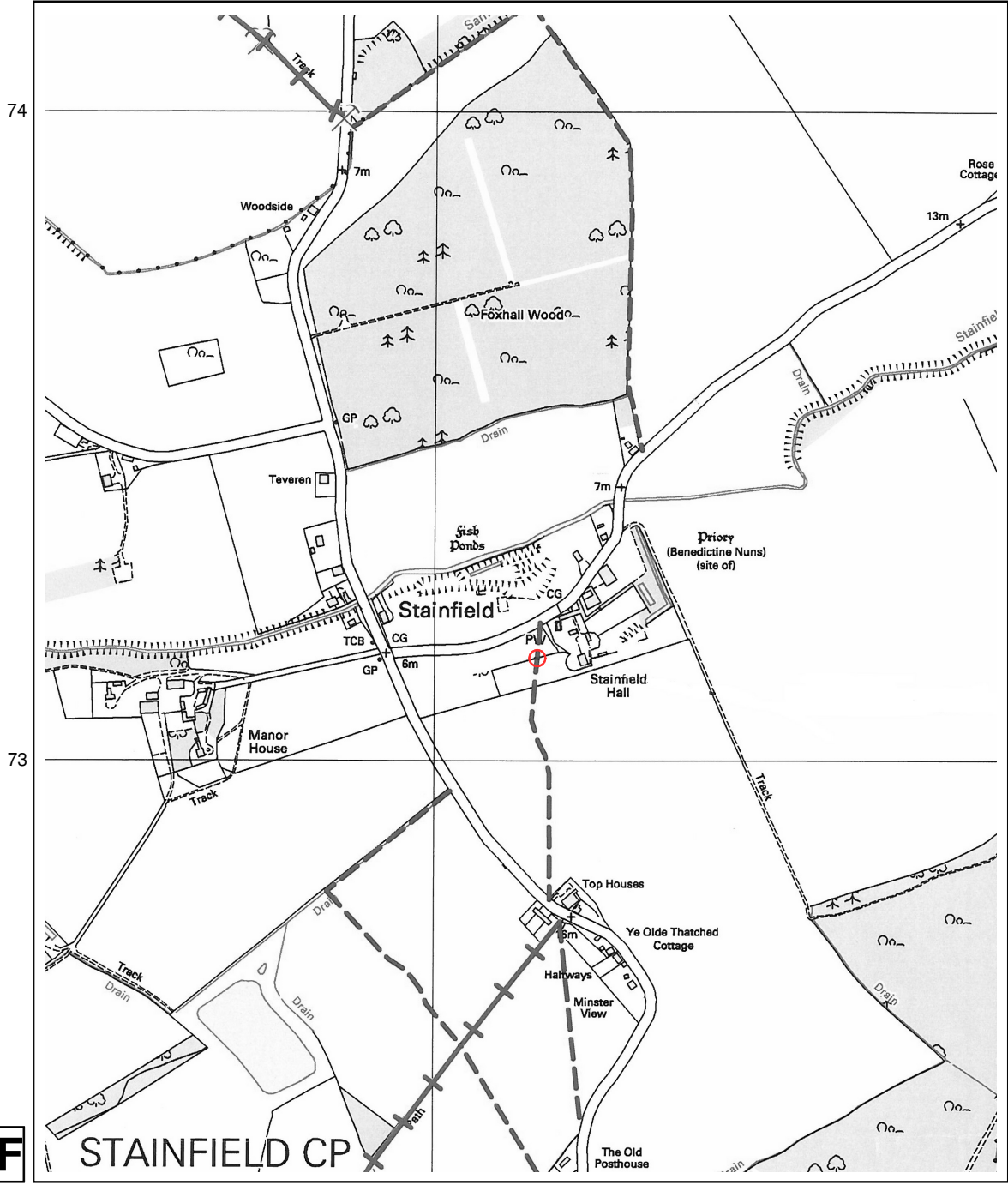
APS Archaeological Project Services  
 BGS British Geological Survey  
 IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists





Figure 1 - General location plan





**TF**

**STAINFIELD CP**

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○ Area of works




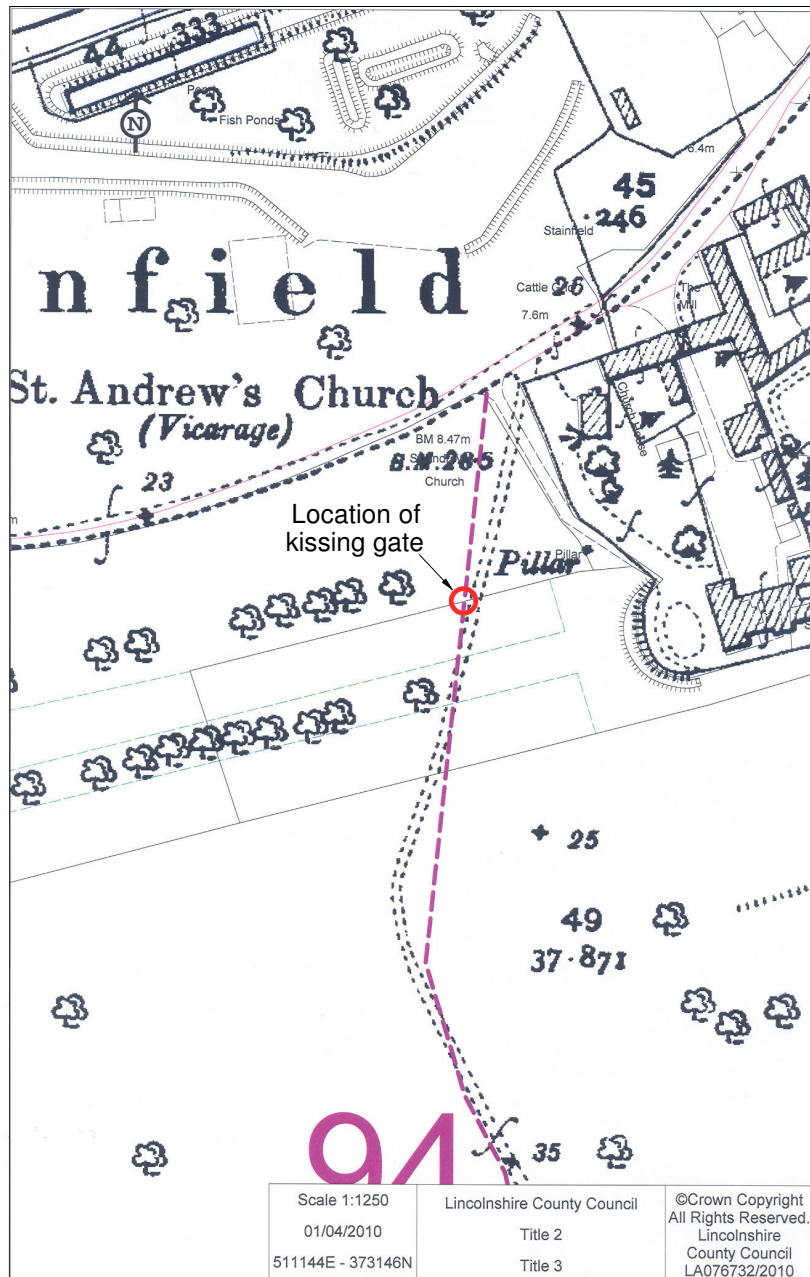

 <b>Archaeological Project Services</b>		
Project Name: Stainfield, Nunnery Gate STNG 10		
Scale 1:10000	Drawn by:PCF	Report No: 23/10

Figure 2 - Site location plan





Base map supplied by Lincolnshire County Council (Development Directorate) Highways & Traffic

 Location of kissing gate

0  100m



Archaeological Project Services

Project Name: Stainfield, Nunnery Gate STNG10

Scale 1:2000

Drawn by: GT

Report No: 23/10

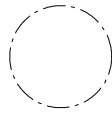
Figure 3 - Detailed site location plan, superimposed on 1887 1st edition Ordnance Survey map



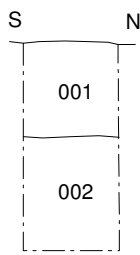
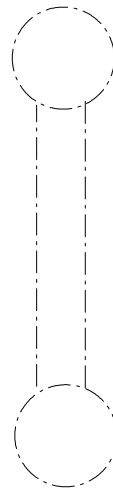
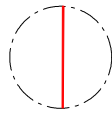




Plan



Section 1



Section 1



Archaeological Project Services

Project Name: Stainfield, Nunnery Gate STNG 10

Scale 1:10 Drawn by: PCF Report No: 23/10

Figure 4 - Plan and section





Plate 1 – View looking south towards the area of works



Plate 2 – Installation of the kissing gate, looking northeast



## Appendix 1

### CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

<b>No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
001	Soft and friable dark brown sandy silt, 0.25m thick	Topsoil
002	Soft and friable dark brown sandy silt with frequent brick/tile and mortar fragments, >0.3m thick	Demolition deposit

## Appendix 2

### THE FINDS

#### CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL

By Anne Boyle

##### Introduction

All the material was recorded at archive level in accordance with the guidelines laid out by the ACBMG (2001) and to conform to Lincolnshire County Council's *Archaeology Handbook*. A total of six fragments of ceramic building material, weighing 1102 grams was recovered from the site.

##### Methodology

The material was laid out and viewed in context order. Fragments were counted and weighed within each context. The ceramic building material was examined visually and using x20 magnification. This information was then added to an Access database. An archive list of the ceramic building material is included in Table 1.

##### Condition

All the fragments show slight signs of abrasion and two of the bricks have evidence for re-use.

##### Results

Table 1, Ceramic Building Material Archive

Cxt	Cname	Full Name	Fabric	Sub type	NoF	W (g)	Description	Date
002	BRK	Brick	Oxidised + fe	50 x 125+mm	1	404	Mortar including over break; end; handmade; mould/cloth impression?	14th to 15th?
002	BRK	Brick	Oxidised coarse sandy		1	61	Corner; handmade	15th to 16th
002	BRK	Brick	Oxidised + organic inclusions	50mm	1	264	Mortar; coarse bedding; handmade; mould/cloth impression	14th to 15th?
002	PNR	Peg, nib or ridge tile	Oxidised + shale/clay pellets		3	373	Flat roofers; one corner	Late 12th to 15th

##### Provenance

All the fragments came from dumped layer (002).

##### Range

Three fragments from flat roofing tiles, all with a shale fabric, are medieval in date. Two re-used bricks are probably medieval and a third fragment is likely to be later, possibly dating to the 15th or 16th centuries.

##### Potential

None of the material poses any problems for long-term storage and should be retained. No further work is required on the group.

##### Summary

A small collection of medieval and later brick and tile was recovered from a dumped deposit at the site.

#### FAUNAL REMAINS

By Paul Cope-Faulkner

##### Introduction

A single item of faunal remains, weighing 8g, was recovered from stratified contexts.

**Provenance**

The faunal remains were recovered from a dumped layer (002).

**Condition**

The shell is in good condition.

**Results**

Table 2, Fragments Identified to Taxa

Cxt	Taxon	Element	Side	Number	W (g)	Comments
002	oyster	shell	top	1	8	

**Summary**

A single oyster shell, probably food waste, was the only item of faunal remains recovered.

**OTHER FINDS**

By Paul Cope-Faulkner

**Introduction**

A single piece of stone weighing 185g was recovered.

**Condition**

The stone is in good condition and presents no problems for long-term storage.

**Results**

Table 3, Other Materials

Cxt	Material	Description	NoF	W (g)	Date
002	stone	Shelly, Barnack-type limestone, not obviously worked	1	185	?medieval

**Provenance**

The stone was recovered from a dumped deposit. It is a Barnack-type limestone and probably comes from the south of Lincolnshire or adjacent areas.

**Range**

A single piece of stone, probably building stone and imported to the area, was recovered. It lacks signs of working.

**Potential**

The stone is of limited potential but is probably a piece of building material imported to the site for construction of the priory in the medieval period. However, it retains no worked surfaces and could be discarded.

**SPOT DATING**

The dating in Table 4 is based on the evidence provided by the finds detailed above.

Table 4, Spot dates

Cxt	Date	Comments
002	15th to 16th	Date on a single fragment of CBM

**ABBREVIATIONS**

ACBMG	Archaeological Ceramic Building Materials Group
CBM	Ceramic Building Material
CXT	Context
NoF	Number of Fragments
W (g)	Weight (grams)

**REFERENCES**

- ~ 2001, *Draft Minimum Standards for the Recovery, Analysis and Publication of Ceramic Building Material*, third version [internet]. Available from <<http://www.geocities.com/acbmg1/CBMGDE3.htm>>
- ~ 2003, *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook* [internet]. Available at <<http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/section.asp?catId=3155>>



## Appendix 3

### GLOSSARY

<b>Bronze Age</b>	A period characterised by the introduction of bronze into the country for tools, between 2250 and 800 BC.
<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, <i>e.g.</i> (004).
<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>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.

## Appendix 4

### THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

2	Context records
1	Photographic record sheet
1	Sheets of scale drawing
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:

The Collection  
Art and Archaeology in Lincolnshire  
Danes Terrace  
Lincoln  
LN2 1LP

Accession Number:	2010.21
Archaeological Project Services Site Code:	STNG 10
OASIS Record No:	archaeo11-74931

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.

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