

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
LAND AT WEST ROAD, WYBERTON
BOSTON,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(BOWY 06)**

**Work Undertaken For
Welden Homes**

October 2006

Report Compiled by
Mark Peachey BA (Hons)

Planning Reference: B/05/0780
National Grid Reference: TF 3215 4295
Lincolnshire Museums Accession No: 2006.241

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT SERVICES



APS Report No.151/06

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1. SUMMARY

A watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of geotechnical test pits prior to a residential development on land at West Road, Wyberton, Boston, Lincolnshire.

The site lay within an area of archaeological potential adjacent to a moated site.

However, the watching brief revealed no archaeological features, the site being located within a former clay pit.

No finds were retrieved.

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

The Boston Borough Archaeologist requested archaeological evaluation of the site. Initially this was to be by archaeological trial trenching but analysis of the 1st edition OS map (oldmaps.co.uk) identified that the site had been used for clay extraction for ‘Brick Works’, subsequent geotechnical work on the site confirmed that the upto 2m of overburden had been removed. As the foundation design was for piled foundations the Boston Borough Archaeologist requested that subsequent geotechnical work be carried out under archaeological supervision to verify the results. Archaeological Project Services was

commissioned by Welden Homes to undertake an archaeological watching brief on geotechnical test pits prior to a residential development on West Road, Wyberton, Boston. The watching brief was carried out on 21st September 2006. Planning Reference: B/05/0780.

2.3 Topography and Geology

Boston is situated 45km southeast of Lincoln and approximately 7km northwest of the coast of The Wash, on the banks of the River Witham in the Fenland of south Lincolnshire. The town is located in the administrative area of Boston Borough, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The proposed development site, forming a rectangular area of approximately 0.25 hectares, lies between the north side of West Road, Wyberton and the south side of the South Forty Foot Drain, centered on National Grid Reference TF 3215 4295. The investigation area lies at a height of c. 2m OD on soils of the Wisbech Association, coarse silty calcareous deposits, overlying marine alluvium, below which is glacial drift (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 127).

2.4 Archaeological Setting

In prehistoric times the Boston area was part of a shifting silt laden delta of the River Witham with tidal river channels, low-lying islands and marsh. Aerial photographs show an extensive network of palaeochannels in the surrounding area.

Bronze Age metalwork was recovered during the building of the docks indicating some activity in the area at this date, but prehistoric occupation sites lie deeply buried under alluvial deposits in this area of the Fens.

Finds of Romano-British date from the Boston area suggest a colonisation of the marsh following a retreat in sea levels in the late Iron Age and Roman periods. Occupation was probably confined to

slightly elevated areas such as the levees of roddons, the raised silt ridges of extinct palaeochannels (Peachey 2004).

Stratified Romano-British remains were recovered from Boston Grammar School, during excavations in advance of the erection of a new music and arts block (Palmer-Brown, 1996). A deposit of silt mixed with artefactual material was situated between 2.85m and 2.30m OD. This layer contained sherds of domestic greyware and Nene Valley ware of the 3rd/4th centuries AD, as well as large quantities of fairly amorphous fragments of fired clay. Roman burials were found at the school during further work.

Pits, ditches and evidence for wheat processing in the 2nd century AD were found at St Thomas Drive, 500m southeast of the site (Peachey 2006).

Pottery including Samian ware has been found at Wyberton on the south side of the South Forty Foot Drain 1km to the west (SMR 22/001). Just to the west of this a small group of enclosures with concentrations of 2nd to 4th century pottery was found in 1964 (SMR 22/011).

There are no references to Boston itself in the Domesday Survey but after being founded in the 12th century, the town grew rapidly to become one of the most important ports in medieval England.

A scheduled rectangular moated site lies to the north of the proposed development (Scheduled Ancient Monument 48 - TF 321 428).

3. AIMS

The aim of the visit was to establish the potential for archaeological remains on the site. Analysis of the 1st edition OS map and subsequent geotechnical work by the client identified the area as being used for clay extraction, this watching brief was to

verify these results.

4. METHODS

Two 'test pits' were machine excavated by the client to check the depth of the suspected modern backfill and to investigate potential for ground contamination. Test Pit 1 was very unstable and could only be recorded by photograph. Test Pit 2 was recorded with each deposit allocated a unique reference number (context number) and individual written descriptions made. A list of all contexts and their descriptions appears as Appendix 2. 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.

5. RESULTS (Figs 3, 4)

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

Test pit 1 (about 5m x 5m)

This pit was unstable with collapsing rubble sides and oil contamination (Plate 2). It was impossible to fully record the test pit but it was noted that the modern deposits extended to 1.6m below the present ground surface.

Test Pit 2 (3m x 0.5m)

This pit had more stable sides and a representative section (Fig 4, Plate 3) was drawn. The earliest deposit, at a depth of 1.6m was a dirty grey clay (003) at least 0.6m thick. Above this was a 1.1m thick layer of mixed grey clay and rubble (002) including early 20th century bottles. This was overlain by 0.5m of brick and concrete rubble (001) also including early 20th century bottles.

6. DISCUSSION

It is probable, although not certain, that clay layer (003) was a natural deposit. However, the two layers above were clearly the modern backfill of a very large excavation, probably a clay pit.

7. CONCLUSION

A watching brief was undertaken on land at West Road, Wyberton, Boston as the site lay in an archaeologically sensitive area.

However, no archaeological deposits were revealed during the investigation, it appears that the site had been subject to extensive clay extraction.

No finds were retrieved

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Welden Homes for commissioning the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. Mark Williams coordinated the work and edited this report along with Tom Lane.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Mark Williams
Site Supervisor: Mark Peachey
Photographic reproduction: Sue Unsworth
Illustration: Mark Peachey
Post-excavation analysis: Mark Peachey

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ekwall, E., 1989, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names* (4th edition)

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

Palmer-Brown, C. 1996 *Boston Grammar School, Archaeological Evaluation Report*. Pre-Construct Archaeology (Unpublished)

Peachey, M.J., 2004 *Archaeological Evaluation, Boston Southern Economic Corridor, Boston Docks Link Road, Boston, Lincolnshire (BSEC04)* APS Unpublished Report **54/04**

Peachey, M.J., 2006 *Archaeological Excavation at St Thomas Drive, Boston, Lincolnshire (BSTD06)* APS unpublished report **116/06**

11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services

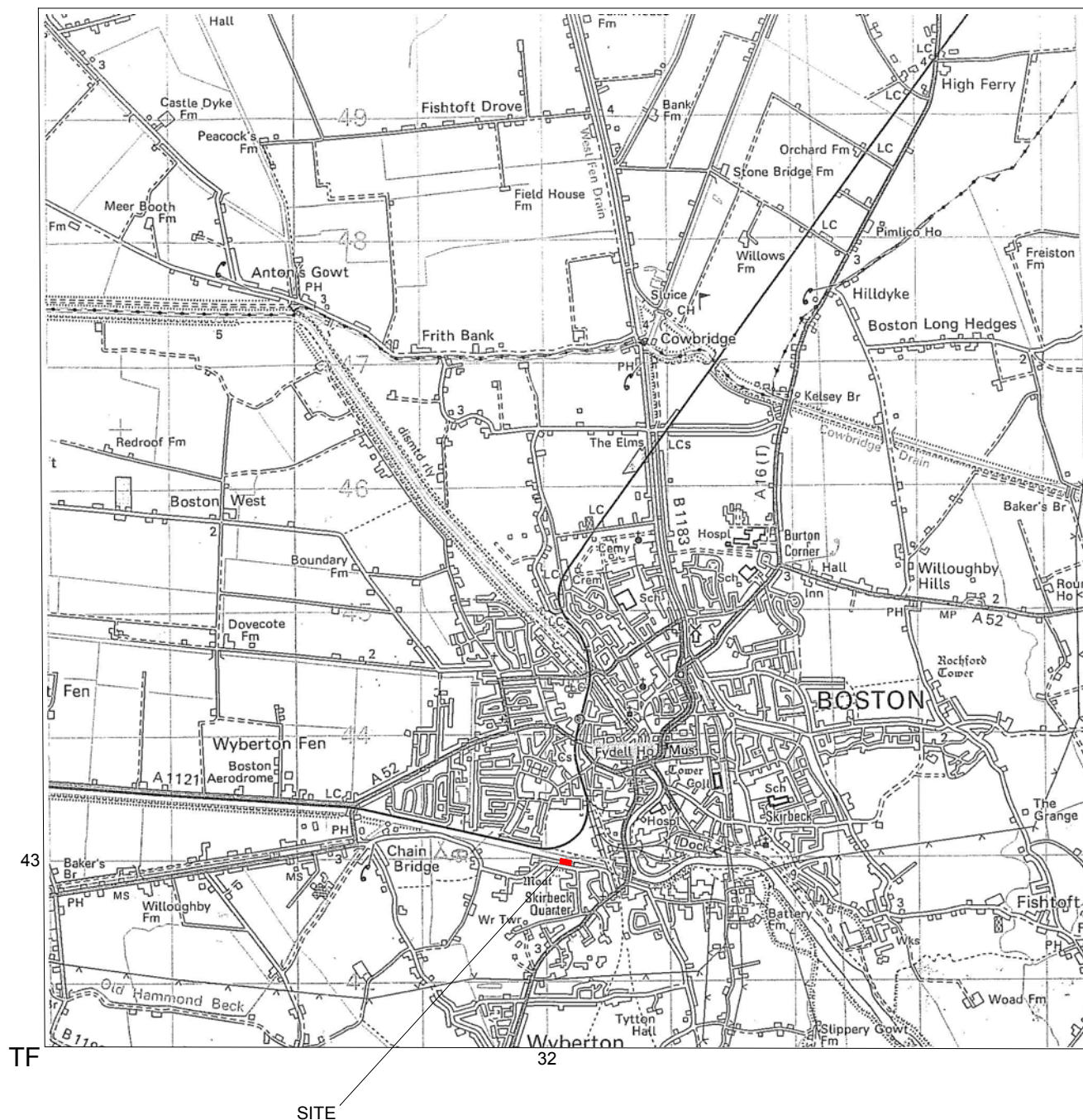
IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

12. OASIS

Details of the investigation has been input to the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS – ref ARCHAEO1-20252)



Figure 1: General Location Plan



Archaeological Project Services

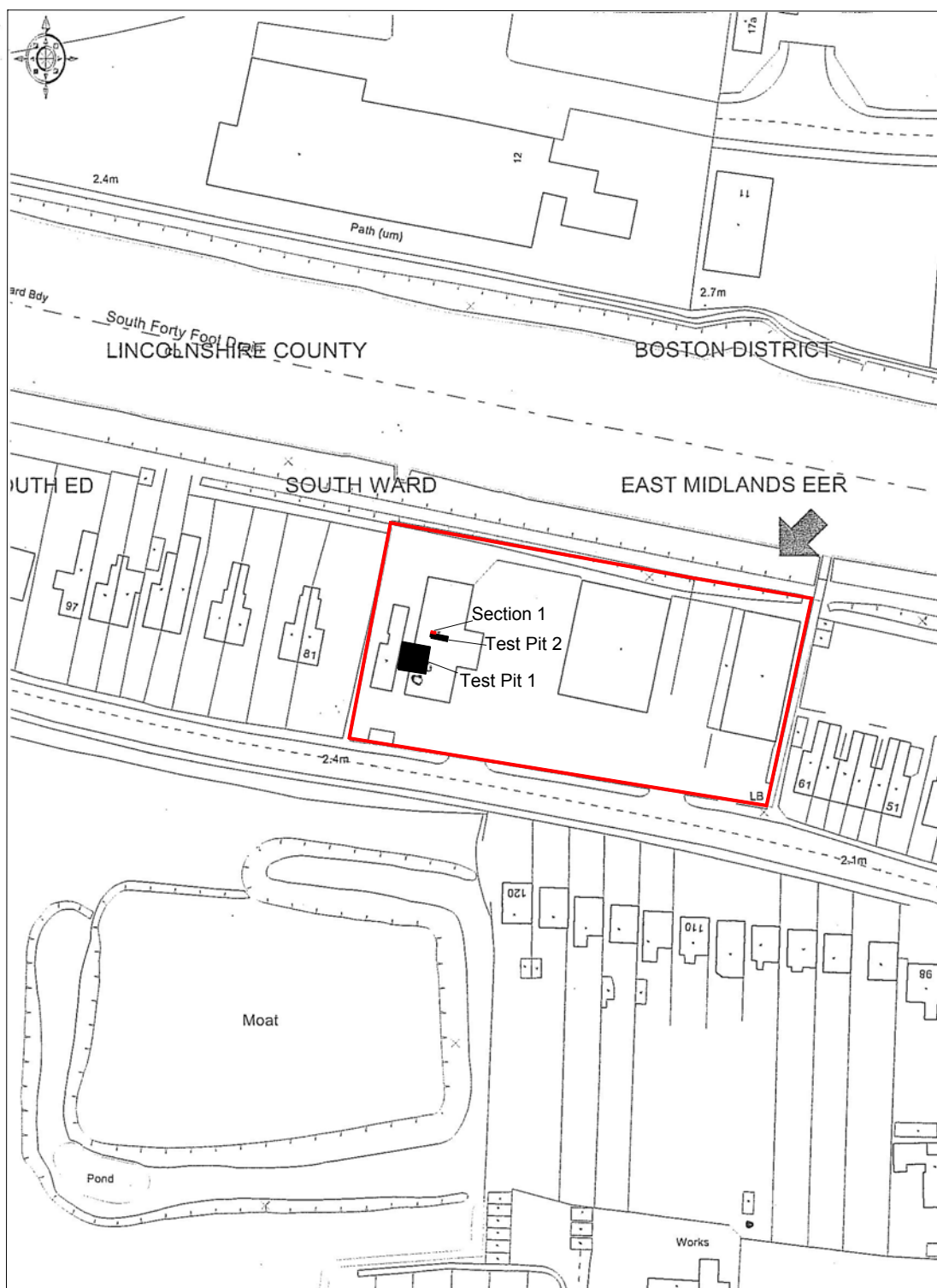
Project Name: Boston West Road BOWY06

Scale 1:50000

Drawn by: MJP

Report No: 151/06

Figure 2. Site location plan



0 50m



Archaeological Project Services

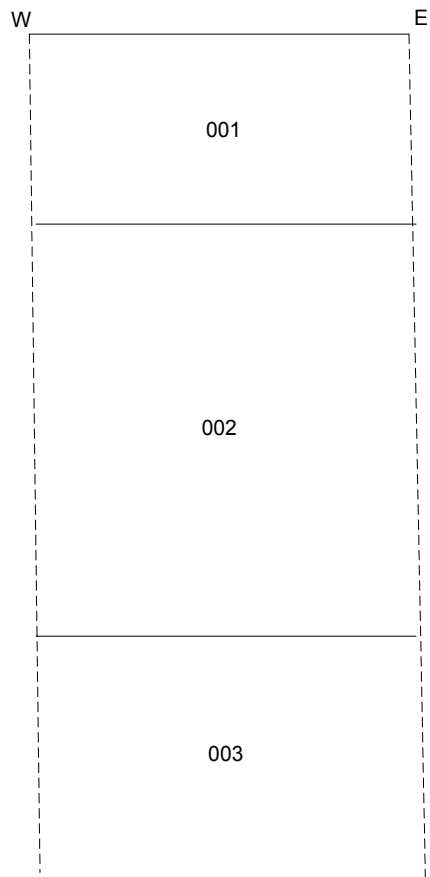
Project Name: Boston West Road BOWY06

Scale 1:1250

Drawn by: MJP

Report No: 151/06

Figure 3. Test Pit Location Plan



Archaeological Project Services

Project Name: Boston West Road BOWY06

Scale 1:20

Drawn by: MJP

Report No: 151/06

Figure 4. Section 1

Appendix 1

CONTEXT SUMMARY

Context	Description	Interpretation	Date
001	Brick and concrete rubble/bottles 0.5m thick	Dumped deposit	Modern
002	Mixed grey clay and rubble including bottles 1.1m thick	Dumped deposit	Modern
003	Dark grey clay 0.6m+ thick	Natural?	

Appendix 2

GLOSSARY

Alluvium	Deposits laid down by water. Marine alluvium is deposited by the sea, and fresh water alluvium is laid down by rivers and in lakes.
Bronze Age	A period characterised by the introduction of bronze into the country for tools, between 2250 and 800 BC.
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, e.g. [004].
Domesday Survey	A survey of property ownership in England compiled on the instruction of William I for taxation purposes in 1086 AD.
Fill	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) that become contained by the 'cut' are referred to as its fill(s).
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.
Prehistoric	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 1st century AD.
Romano-British	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.
Saxon	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 410-1066 when England was largely settled.

Appendix 3

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

- 1 Trench record sheet
- 1 Photographic record sheet
- 1 Daily record sheet

All primary records 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
The Collection
Danes Terrace
Lincoln
LN2 1LP

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: 2006.241

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: BOWY06

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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OASIS ID: archaeol1-20252

Project details

Project name	West Road, Wyberton, Boston
Short description of the project	A scheme of archaeological monitoring and recording was conducted during the excavation of geotechnical test pits, dug to inform residential development on land at Wyberton West Road, Boston. No archaeological features, deposits or finds were encountered, most likely due to extensive former clay extraction in this area.
Project dates	Start: 21-09-2006 End: 21-09-2006
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	BOWY06 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	LCNCC 2006.241 - Museum accession ID
Any associated project reference codes	ELI7403 - HER event no.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 13 - Waste ground
Monument type	N/A None
Significant Finds	N/A None
Investigation type	""Test-Pit Survey"", ""Watching Brief""
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Project location

Country	England
Site location	LINCOLNSHIRE BOSTON WYBERTON West Road, Wyberton, Boston, Lincolnshire
Postcode	PE21 7JQ

Study area 0.25 Hectares

Site coordinates TF 3213 4295 52.9672767712 -0.0323441374285 52 58 02 N 000 01 56 W
Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 2.00m Max: 2.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeological Project Services

Project brief originator Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body

Project design originator Mark Williams

Project director/manager Mark Williams

Project supervisor Mark Peachey

Type of sponsor/funding body Developer

Name of sponsor/funding body Welden Homes

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient The Collection

Digital Archive ID LCNCC 2006.241

Digital Contents "Stratigraphic"

Digital Media available "Text"

Paper Archive recipient The Collection

Paper Archive ID LCNCC 2006.241

Paper Contents "Stratigraphic","Survey"

Paper Media available "Context sheet","Diary","Map","Matrices","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section","Survey"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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Peachey. M

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Project director/manager Mark Williams

Project supervisor Mark Peachey

Type of sponsor/funding body Developer

Name of sponsor/funding body Welden Homes

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient The Collection

Digital Archive ID LCNCC 2006.241

Digital Contents "Stratigraphic"

Digital Media available "Text"

Paper Archive recipient The Collection

Paper Archive ID LCNCC 2006.241

Paper Contents "Stratigraphic","Survey"

Paper Media available "Context sheet","Diary","Map","Matrices","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section","Survey"

Project bibliography 1

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