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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
AT RUTLAND HOUSE,  
CAROLGATE,  
EAST RETFORD,  
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE  
(RRHC 07)**

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**Work Undertaken For  
Wynbrook Homes**

June 2008

Report Compiled by  
Paul Cope-Faulkner BA (Hons) AIFA

Planning Application No: 01/06/00180  
National Grid Reference: SK 7071 8078  
OASIS Record No: archaeol1-43203

APS Report No. **67/08**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
PROJECT  
SERVICES**



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## 1. SUMMARY

*A watching brief was undertaken during groundworks at Rutland House, Carolgate, East Retford, Nottinghamshire. The watching brief monitored the excavation of four geotechnical test pits.*

*The site lies close to the medieval (AD 1066-1540) core of the town, though there are few extent remains of the period. St Swithun's church contains re-used medieval stonework. The site lies adjacent to the Chesterfield Canal which was constructed in 1777.*

*The watching brief revealed a sequence of natural, undated and recent deposits. Undated layers include an organic silt lying adjacent to the canal which may represent dredging of the channel. A number of dumped deposits were encountered which may have been a deliberate attempt to heighten the ground level. Structural features were also encountered. No artefacts were retrieved during the investigation.*

## 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 Wynbrook Homes to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with new residential development at Carolgate, East

Retford, Nottinghamshire. Approval for the development was sought through the submission of planning application 01/06/00180. The watching brief was carried out on the 18<sup>th</sup> April 2007 in accordance with a specification prepared by Archaeological Project Services (Appendix 1) and approved by the North Assistant Archaeological Officer, Nottinghamshire County Council.

### 2.3 Topography and Geology

East Retford is located 40km northeast of Nottingham and 12km east of Worksop, in the administrative district of Bassetlaw, Nottinghamshire (Fig. 1).

The site is located 490m southeast of the centre of East Retford as defined by the Market Place at National Grid Reference SK 7071 8078 (Fig. 2). The site lies on the east side of Carolgate adjacent to the Chesterfield Canal at a height of c. 18m and within the floodplain of the River Idle.

Local soils are of the Dunnington Heath Association, typically loamy over clayey soils (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 172). These soils are developed upon a drift geology of River Terrace deposits and recent alluvium associated with the River Idle which in turn seal a solid geology of Permo-Triassic sandstones and mudstones.

### 2.4 Archaeological Setting

The site lies to the south of the medieval town of East Retford. Retford is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of c. 1086. Referred to as *Redforde* the name is derived from the Old English and simply means ‘the red ford’ (Ekwall 1989, 385). At the time of Domesday, the land was held by Roger of Bully with the Archbishop of York having control of a mill (Morris 1977).

The town may have been a deliberate plantation, established as a royal borough by Henry I about 1105 to rival Blyth

Priory (Weir 1991, 26). Although St Swithun's church is largely 17<sup>th</sup> century in date, there are elements surviving which suggest a 12<sup>th</sup> century foundation (Pevsner 2003, 295).

The development site lies adjacent to the Chesterfield Canal which was constructed in 1777 (Weir 1991, 99).

### 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, to determine their date, function and origin.

### 4. METHODS

Four Test Pits were excavated by machine to depths required for the geotechnical investigation. As the pits exceeded the safe working depth, observations and recording was undertaken from the top of the trench. 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 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.

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

### 5. RESULTS

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

#### Test Pit 1

The earliest deposit encountered in this trench was a layer of greyish brown sandy silt (008) that measured in excess of 0.7m thick. This was in turn overlain by a 0.5m thick layer of grey organic silt (007).

Above this was a series of dumped deposits comprising a greyish brown mixed layer (006) and a discrete dump of grey ash (005). Sealing this was a demolition deposit of mixed silt with brick/tile fragments (004) over which a greyish brown organic silt turf layer (003) had developed.

A levelling deposit (002) had been laid for the current surface of grey gravel (001).

#### Test Pit 2

Natural deposits in this trench consisted of greyish brown sandy silt (014) overlain by grey organic silt (013). This had been sealed by a layer of red sand and gravel (012).

This was in turn sealed by the levelling layer (011) for the current yard surface (009 and 010).

#### Test Pit 3

A layer of greyish brown sandy silt (021) was identified as natural in this Test Pit. This was overlain by a further deposit of greyish brown sandy silt (020).

Above this was a construction deposit of mortar and hardcore (019) which may be contemporary with a brick wall (017). The brick wall was partially obscured by a demolition deposit of grey sandy silt with brick/tile fragments (018).

Recent deposits comprised the levelling layer (016) for the current yard surface (015).

#### Test Pit 4

The earliest deposit at the base of this Pit was a layer of grey organic silt (028) measuring over 0.3m thick.

This was sealed by a demolition deposit of mixed silts and brick/tile fragments (027) which was further overlain by a dumped layer of coal (026).

Above this was a bedding layer of yellowish brown sand for a brick surface (024), directly over which lay the modern surface (022 and 023).

## 6. DISCUSSION

Natural deposits comprise sandy silts of the underlying drift geology. These lay at 1.3m to 1.7m below the modern ground surface.

In Test Pits 1, 2 and 4 adjacent to the Chesterfield Canal, the natural geology was overlain by grey organic silts. The origin of these deposits is unclear, but they may relate to digging, cleansing or dredging of the canal. These were often sealed by dumped deposits, perhaps an attempt to raise the ground level.

Remains of former structures were encountered in Test Pits 3 and 4 and are presumably remains of buildings depicted on early Ordnance Survey maps of the area.

No other archaeological remains were encountered and it is probable that the site lay outside the medieval town. No artefacts were retrieved from the investigation.

## 7. CONCLUSION

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at Carolgate, East Retford, as the site lay close to the core of the medieval town.

However, no remains were encountered that were associated with the medieval town. Deposits associated with the

Chesterfield Canal were revealed along with structural remains of early modern date. No artefacts were retrieved from the investigation.

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Mr S Day of Wynbrook Homes for commissioning the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Steve Malone who edited this report along with Tom Lane. Dave Start kindly allowed access to the library maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

## 9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Steve Malone  
 Site Supervisor: Bob Garland  
 Photographic reproduction: Sue Unsworth  
 Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner  
 Post-excavation analysis: Paul Cope-Faulkner

## 10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- 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**
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- Pevsner, N, 2003 *Nottinghamshire*, The Buildings of England (2<sup>nd</sup> edition revised E Williamson)

Weir, C, 1991 *The Nottinghamshire Heritage*

## 11. ABBREVIATIONS

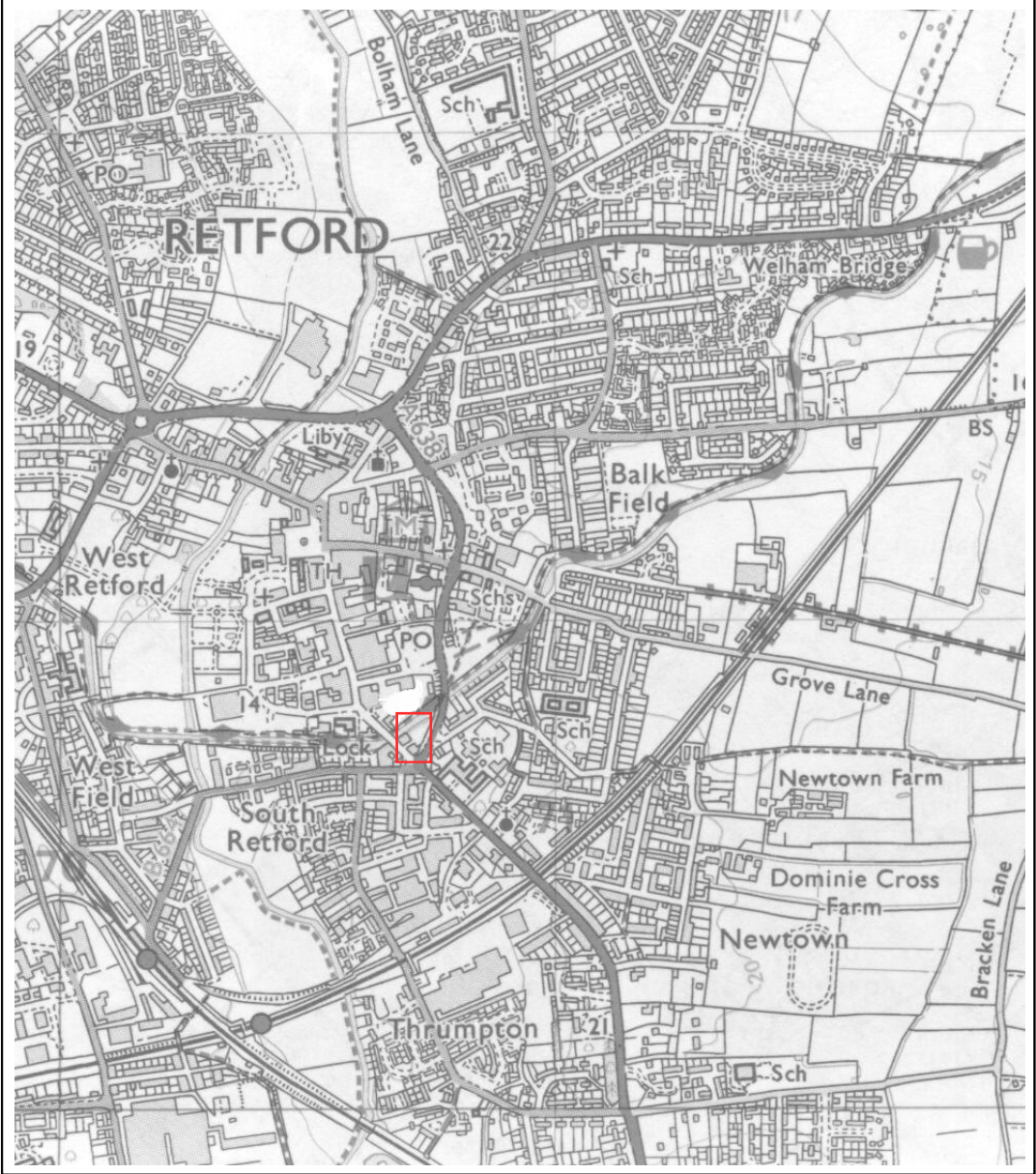
APS Archaeological Project Services

IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists




Figure 1 - General location plan





**SK**

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (C) Crown Copyright. HTL Ltd Licence No. AL5041A0001

 Area detailed in Figure 3




 <b>Archaeological Project Services</b>		
Project Name: Carolgate, East Retford RRHC07		
Scale 1:15000	Drawn by: PCF	Report No: 67/08

Figure 2 - Site location plan

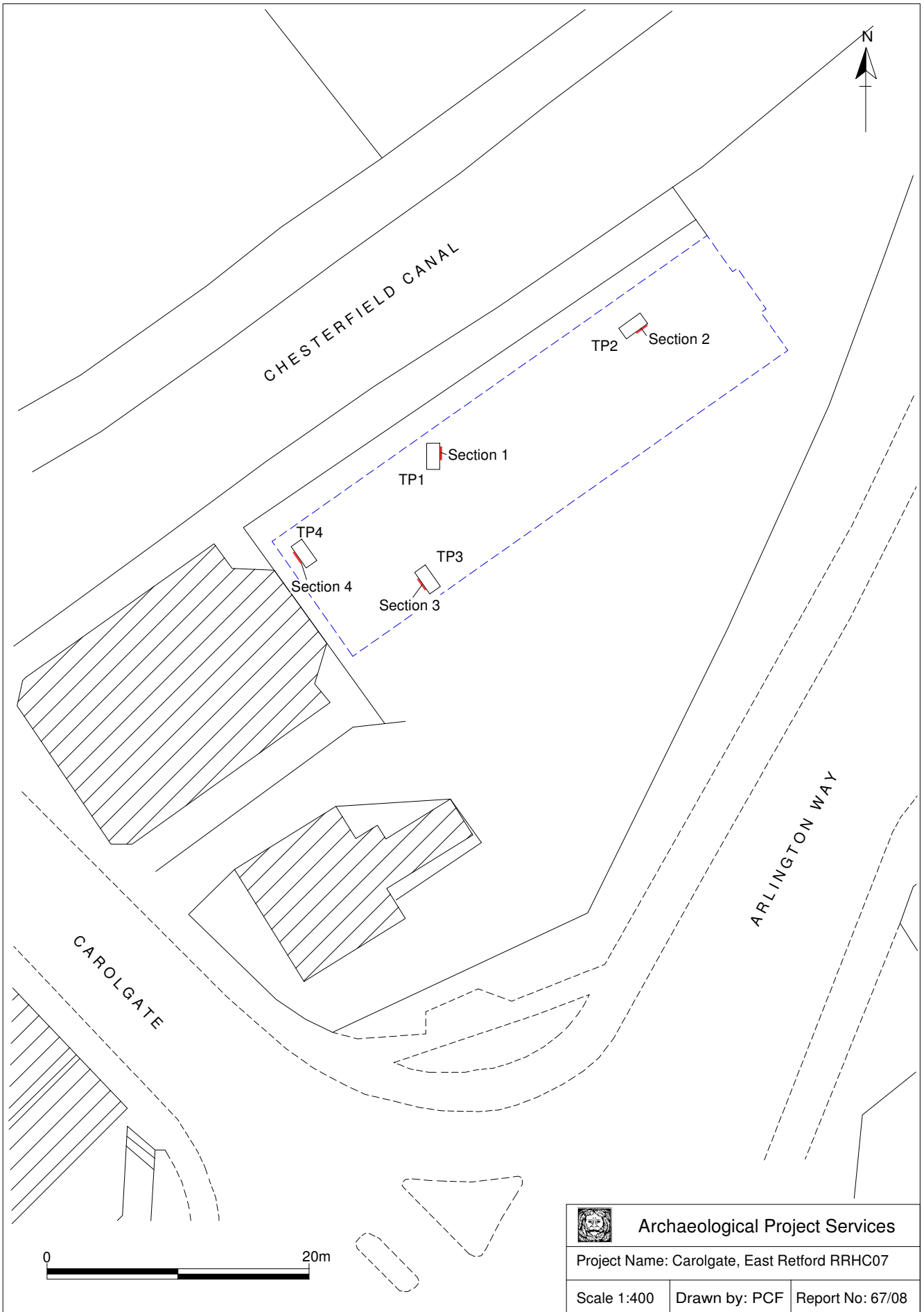
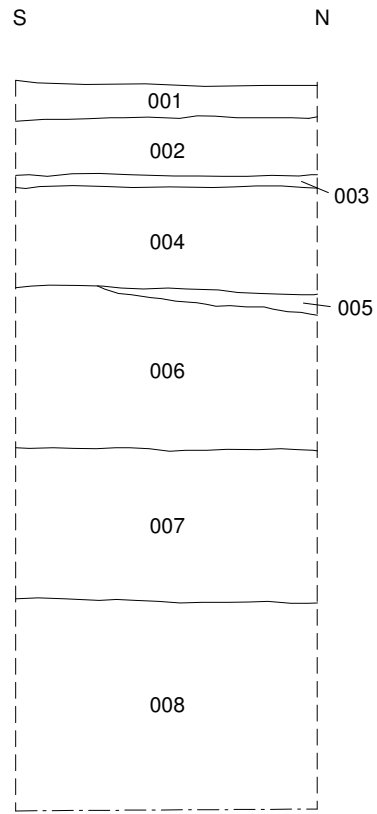
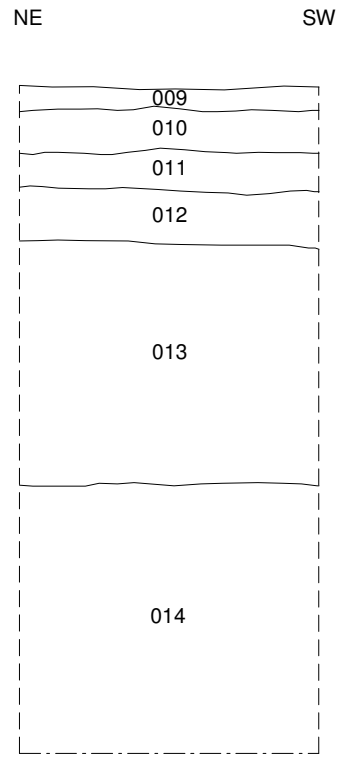


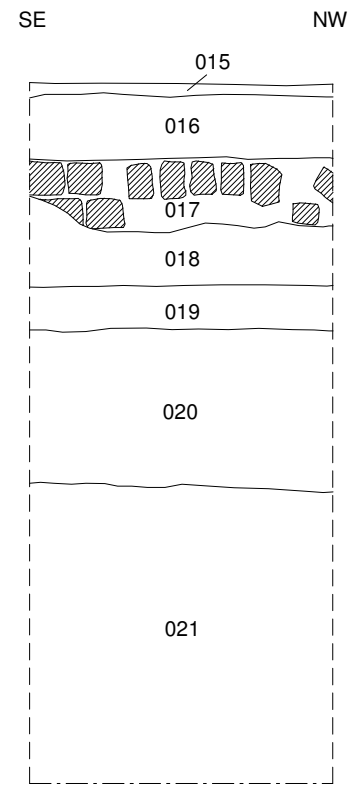
Figure 3 - Plan of the development site showing location of drawn sections



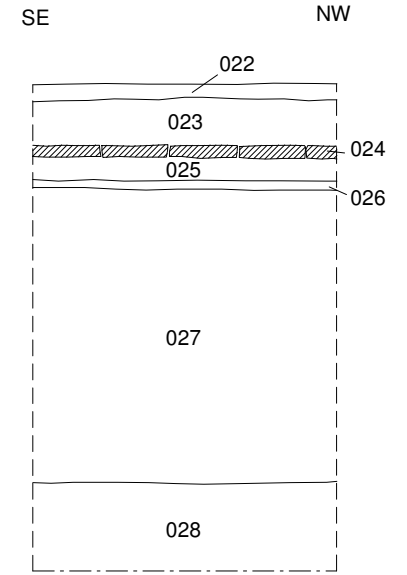
Section 1



Section 2



Section 3



Section 4

 Brick




 Archaeological Project Services		
Project Name: Carolgate, East Retford RRHC07		
Scale 1:25	Drawn by: PCF	Report No: 67/08

Figure 4 - Sections 1 to 4





Plate 1 – General view across the site, looking southwest



Plate 2 – Section 3, looking southwest

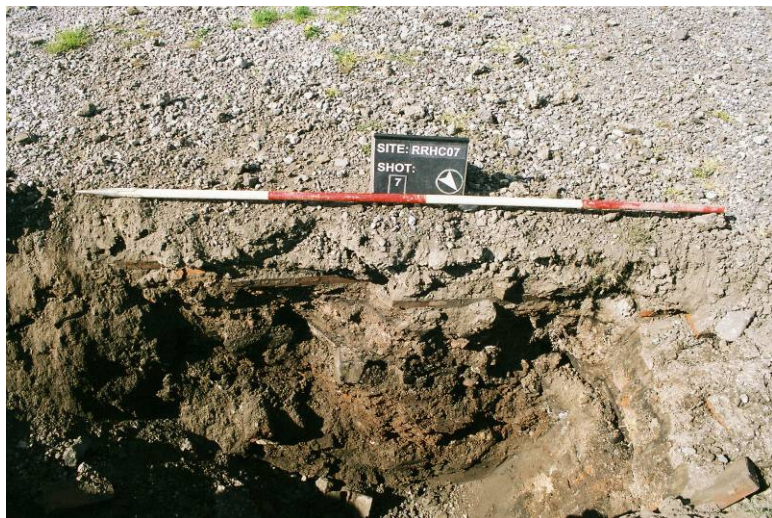


Plate 3 – Section 4, looking southwest

## **Appendix 1**

### **LAND AT CAROLGATE, RETFORD, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE - SPECIFICATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

#### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 *Archaeological monitoring is required during groundworks associated with residential development at Carolgate, Retford, Nottinghamshire.*
- 1.2 *The area is archaeologically sensitive lying within the historic core of the town close to the River Idle.*
- 1.3 *The archaeological work will consist of a watching brief during development works on the site.*
- 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 archaeological monitoring of groundworks associated with residential development at Carolgate, Retford, Nottinghamshire.
- 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 Retford is located approximately 40km northeast of Nottingham in the Bassetlaw District of Nottinghamshire. The development area lies in the south of the town centre on the east side of Carolgate, just south of the Chesterfield Canal at National Grid Reference SK 7071 8078.

#### **4 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Planning permission (Application No 01/06/00180) for residential development of the site has been granted by Bassetlaw District Council subject to the implementation of a programme of archaeological works. This is to entail monitoring of groundworks connected with the development.

#### **5 SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY**

- 5.1 The site is relatively level at c. 25m O.D. on the east bank of the River Idle. Local soils are mapped as loamy over clayey soils of the Dunnington Heath Association developed on the drift deposits over mudstone (Hodge et al. 1984, 172).

#### **6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 6.1 The site lies within a wide area of archaeological interest and potential within an extensive cropmark landscape of late prehistoric and Roman agriculture and settlement. Retford is recorded in the Domesday Book indicating an origin for the settlement in at least the late Saxon period. The site lies some 500m south of the early core of the town around the market place and the parish church of St Swithun.

## 7 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

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

## 8 SITE OPERATIONS

### 8.1 General considerations

- 8.1.1 All work will be undertaken following statutory Health and Safety requirements in operation at the time of the watching brief.
- 8.1.2 The work will be undertaken according to the relevant codes of practise issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (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 Archaeological monitoring will be undertaken during all overburden stripping and includes the archaeological monitoring of excavation works for all services including drainage works and manholes.
- 8.2.2 Stripped areas and 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.
- 8.2.3 Any finds recovered will be bagged and labelled for later analysis.
- 8.2.5 Throughout the watching brief a photographic record will be compiled. The photographic record will consist of:
  - \* the site during work to show specific stages, and the layout of the archaeology within the investigation areas.
  - \* groups of features where their relationship is important

## 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 fieldwork 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:

- \* A non-technical summary of the results of the investigation.
- \* A description of the archaeological setting of the watching brief.
- \* Description of the topography of the site.
- \* Description of the methodologies used during the watching brief.
- \* A text describing the findings of the watching brief.
- \* A consideration of the local, regional and national context of the watching brief findings.
- \* Plans of the archaeological features exposed. If a sequence of archaeological deposits is encountered, separate plans for each phase will be produced.
- \* Sections of the trenches and archaeological features.
- \* Interpretation of the archaeological features exposed, and their chronology and setting within the surrounding landscape.
- \* Appropriate photographs of the site and specific archaeological features.

10 **REPORT DEPOSITION**

- 10.1 Copies of the investigation report will be sent to: the client, Bassetlaw 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 Nottingham Museums, or other appropriate repository. This will be undertaken according to the requirements and guidelines of the Society of Museum Archaeologists, and any specific conditions set by the receiving museum 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 *Transactions of the Thoroton Society of Nottinghamshire*. 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 Nottinghamshire County Council Archaeology Section. 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.

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 monitoring 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 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 – D Knight, Trent & Peak Archaeological Unit Roman - B Precious or R Leary, Independent Specialists Anglo-Saxon-medieval – A Boyle, APS or J Young, Independent Specialist



Post-medieval and later – A Boyle or G Taylor APS

Non-pottery Artefacts	J Cowgill, Independent Specialist/G Taylor, APS
Animal Bones	J Kitch, APS
Environmental Analysis	J Rackham, Environmental Archaeology Consultancy or V Fryer, 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**

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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**

Morris, J., 1977, ed. *Domesday Book*, History from the Sources

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

Specification: Version 1, 4 July 2007

## Appendix 2

### CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No	Test Pit	Description	Interpretation
001	1	Friable light grey gravel, 0.12m thick	Yard surface
002	1	Loose mid grey gravel and mid red brick fragments, 0.2m thick	Levelling deposit
003	1	Loose dark greyish brown organic silt, 40mm thick	Former turf horizon
004	1	Firm mixed greys, browns and red silt and brick/tile fragments, 0.36m thick	Demolition deposit
005	1	Loose dark grey ash, 60mm thick	Dumped deposit
006	1	Firm mid greyish brown mixed, 0.54m thick	Dumped deposit
007	1	Soft dark grey organic silt, 0.5m thick	?Dumped deposit
008	1	Soft light greyish brown sandy silt, >0.7m thick	Natural deposit
009	2	Friable light grey sandy silt with frequent gravel, 80mm thick	Surface
010	2	Friable light grey gravel, 0.15m thick	Yard surface
011	2	Loose light grey gravel and mid red brick fragments, 0.15m thick	Levelling deposit
012	2	Loose mid red sand and gravel, 0.18m thick	?Dumped deposit
013	2	Soft dark grey organic silt, 0.78m thick	?Dumped deposit
014	2	Soft light greyish brown sandy silt, >0.9m thick	Natural deposit
015	3	Friable light grey gravel, 40mm thick	Surface
016	3	Loose mid grey fine debris and gravel, 0.22m thick	Levelling deposit
017	3	Brick (225mm x 110mm x 75mm) structure, uncertain bond, southwest face visible, 1m length seen by 0.18m high	Wall
018	3	Loose mid grey sandy silt with demolition material, 0.17m thick	Demolition deposit
019	3	Firm to soft mixed mortar	Construction layer
020	3	Firm mid greyish brown sandy silt, 0.54m thick	?dumped deposit
021	3	Soft light greyish brown sandy silt, >0.98m thick	Natural deposit
022	4	Friable light grey gravel with sandy silt, 60mm thick	Surface
023	4	Friable light grey gravel, 0.15m thick	Surface
024	4	Brick (225mm x 107mm x 42mm) structure, pavers laid flat, 2m extent visible	Surface
025	4	Friable light yellowish brown sand, 70mm thick	Bedding for (024)
026	4	Friable black fine coal, 30mm thick	Dumped deposit
027	4	Firm mixed grey, brown and red silts and demolition material, 0.98m thick	Demolition deposit
028	4	Soft dark grey organic silt, >0.3m thick	Dumped deposit

## Appendix 3

### GLOSSARY

<b>Alluvium</b>	A deposit (usually clay, silts or sands) laid down in water. Marine alluvium is deposited by the sea and freshwater alluvium by streams, rivers or within lakes.
<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>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>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.

## Appendix 4

### THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

28	Context records
1	Photographic record sheet
1	Daily record sheet
4	Sheets of scale drawings

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:

Nottingham Museums and Art Gallery  
Brewhouse Yard  
Castle Boulevard  
Nottingham  
NG7 1FB

Archaeological Project Services Site Code:

RRHC 07

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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