
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND
RECORDING AT CHURCH WALK,
MAREHAM-LE-FEN,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(MFCW 10)**

**Work Undertaken For
David Smith - Builder**

July 2010

Report Compiled by
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Planning Application No: S/114/01022/07
National Grid Reference: TF 2783 6112
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES**



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1. SUMMARY

A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken at Church Walk, Mareham-le-Fen. The investigations monitored the excavation of foundation trenches for a new detached dwelling.

The site lies within the core of the medieval (AD 1066-1540) village best represented by the 13th century church of St Helen. A medieval tile kiln is also known from the area and the village is surrounded by earthworks of ridge and furrow. Prehistoric, Romano-British (AD43-410) and Early Saxon (AD 410-650) finds have also been made in the general area.

The investigations revealed a sequence of natural, subsoil and topsoil with no archaeological deposits encountered. No artefacts were retrieved from the investigation.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by David Smith, Builder, to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during groundworks associated with new residential development at Church Walk, Mareham-le-Fen, Lincolnshire. Approval for the development was sought through the submission of planning application S/114/01022/07. The investigation was carried out on the 7th July 2010 in accordance with a specification prepared by Archaeological Project Services and approved by the Historic Environment Team, Lincolnshire County Council.

2.2 Topography and Geology

Mareham-le-Fen is located approximately 8km south of Horncastle in the

administrative district of East Lindsey, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The site is located 140m south of the centre of the village as defined by the parish church of St Helen at National Grid Reference TF 2738 6112 (Fig 2). Situated to the west of Church Walk, the site lies at a height of c. 7m OD on a gentle slope down to the southwest, towards the northern fens.

Local soils are the Blackwood Association, typically sandy gley soils (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 127). These soils are developed on a drift geology of river and glacially derived sand and gravel which in turn seal a solid geology of Jurassic clays of the Ancholme Group (BGS 1995).

2.3 Archaeological Setting

Mareham-le-Fen is located in an area of known archaeological remains dating from the prehistoric period to the present day. Prehistoric flints are known from the east of the village and a number of Bronze Age axes have been found to the south. Romano-British and Early Saxon pottery have also been discovered in the village core.

Mareham-le-Fen is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of c. 1086. Referred to as *Marun*, the name is derived from the Old English *mære* meaning 'at the pools or ponds' (Cameron 1998, 86). At the time of Domesday the land was held by the King and contained a church with resident priest, 60 acres of meadow and 300 acres of underwood (Foster and Longley 1976).

Extant remains of the medieval period include St Helen's church which dates from the 13th century and a graveyard cross of probable 14th century date (Pevsner and Harris 1989, 551). Earthworks of ridge and furrow of the medieval field system survive around the village and a medieval tile kiln was excavated to the west of the village.

Excavations undertaken during 2001 and 2002 off Fieldside east of the village identified evidence for occupation at the site from the 11th-20th century. Two main periods of activity were identified, the high medieval (13th to mid 14th century) and the late medieval (15th century) followed by a hiatus in occupation during the 16th and 17th centuries and little subsequent activity in the area. Evidence of local tile production, along with new evidence of brick production before the 15th century was also recorded (Hall 2003).

Archaeological watching briefs undertaken to the northwest of the site identified buried ploughsoils and medieval pottery (Peachey 2008) or recent deposits (Murphy 2006).

3. AIMS

The aim of the archaeological investigation was to ensure that any archaeological features exposed during the groundworks should be recorded and, if present, to determine their date, function and origin.

4. METHODS

Prior to the excavation of foundation trenches, topsoil was stripped from the site. Foundation trenches were then excavated by machine to depths of 1m below the stripped surface. Following excavation, the sides of the trenches were then 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 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.

The earliest deposit encountered during the watching brief was a layer of natural yellow orange clayey sand with frequent gravel (103). This measured in excess of 0.31m thick (Fig. 4, Sections 1 and 2).

Developed upon the natural was a 0.6m thick subsoil comprising brownish grey sandy silt (102). This was in turn sealed by the modern topsoil of brown sandy silt (101) that was up to 0.2m thick.

6. DISCUSSION

Natural deposits of clayey sand and gravel relate to the underlying drift deposit of glaciofluvial origin. These were sealed by a subsoil which suggest that the site has been under an agricultural regime in the past. No archaeological deposits were encountered and no finds were retrieved from the investigation. Such an absence of features may imply that the site lay within a once more extensive village green, the surviving part of which lies immediately to the northeast.

7. CONCLUSION

A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken at Church Walk, Mareham-le-Fen, as the

site lay within the core of the medieval village.

However, no medieval deposits were encountered. A sequence of natural, subsoil and topsoil deposits were recorded and suggest that the site lay within open ground. No finds were recovered during the work.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Mr David Smith 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: Bob Hamilton
 Finds processing:
 Photographic reproduction: Sue Unsworth
 Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner
 Post-excavation analysis: Paul Cope-Faulkner

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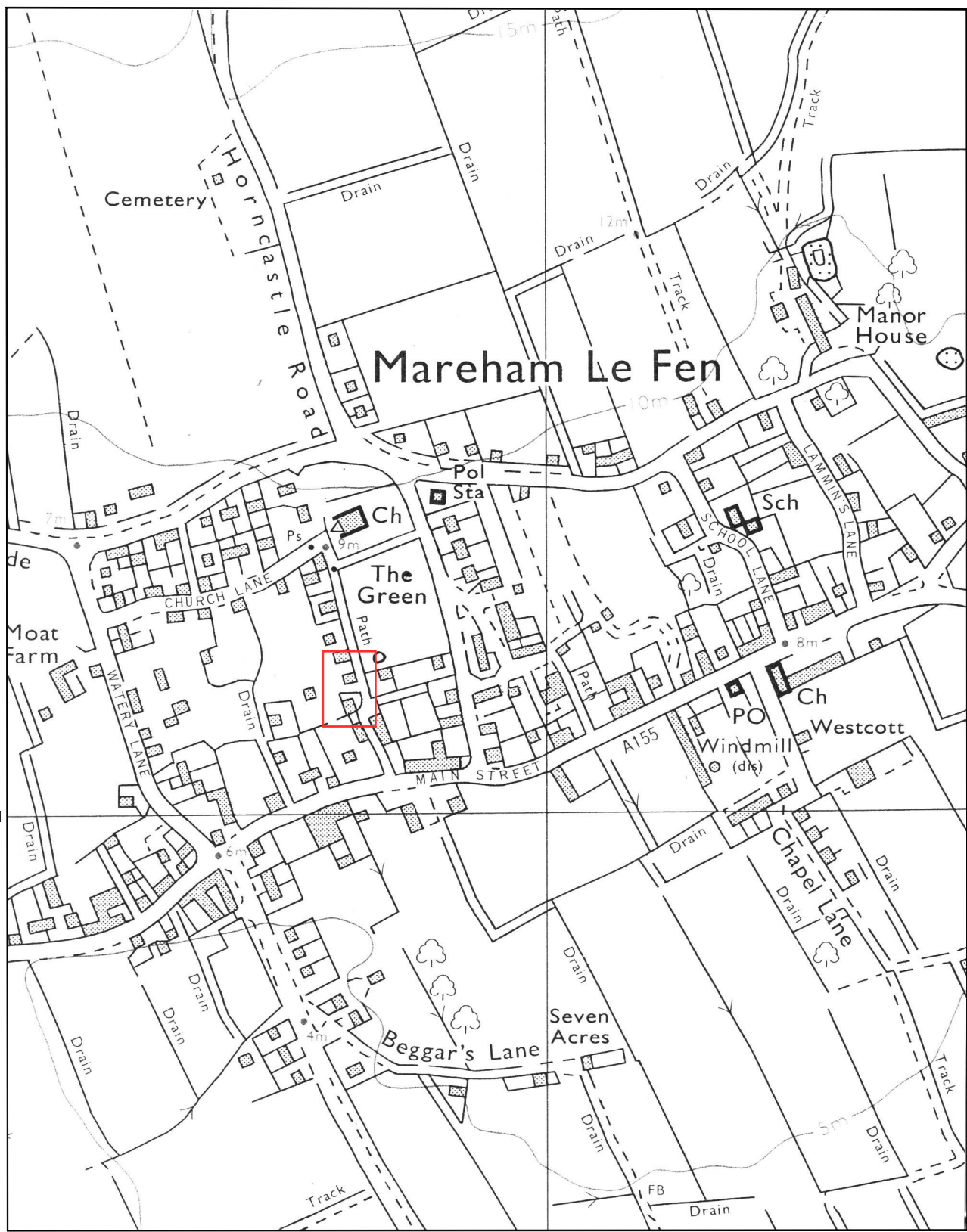
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11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services
 BGS British Geological Survey



Figure 1 - General location plan



TF

Area detailed in Figure 3

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Scale 1: 5000 Drawn by:PCF Report No: 62/10

Figure 2 - Site Location Plan

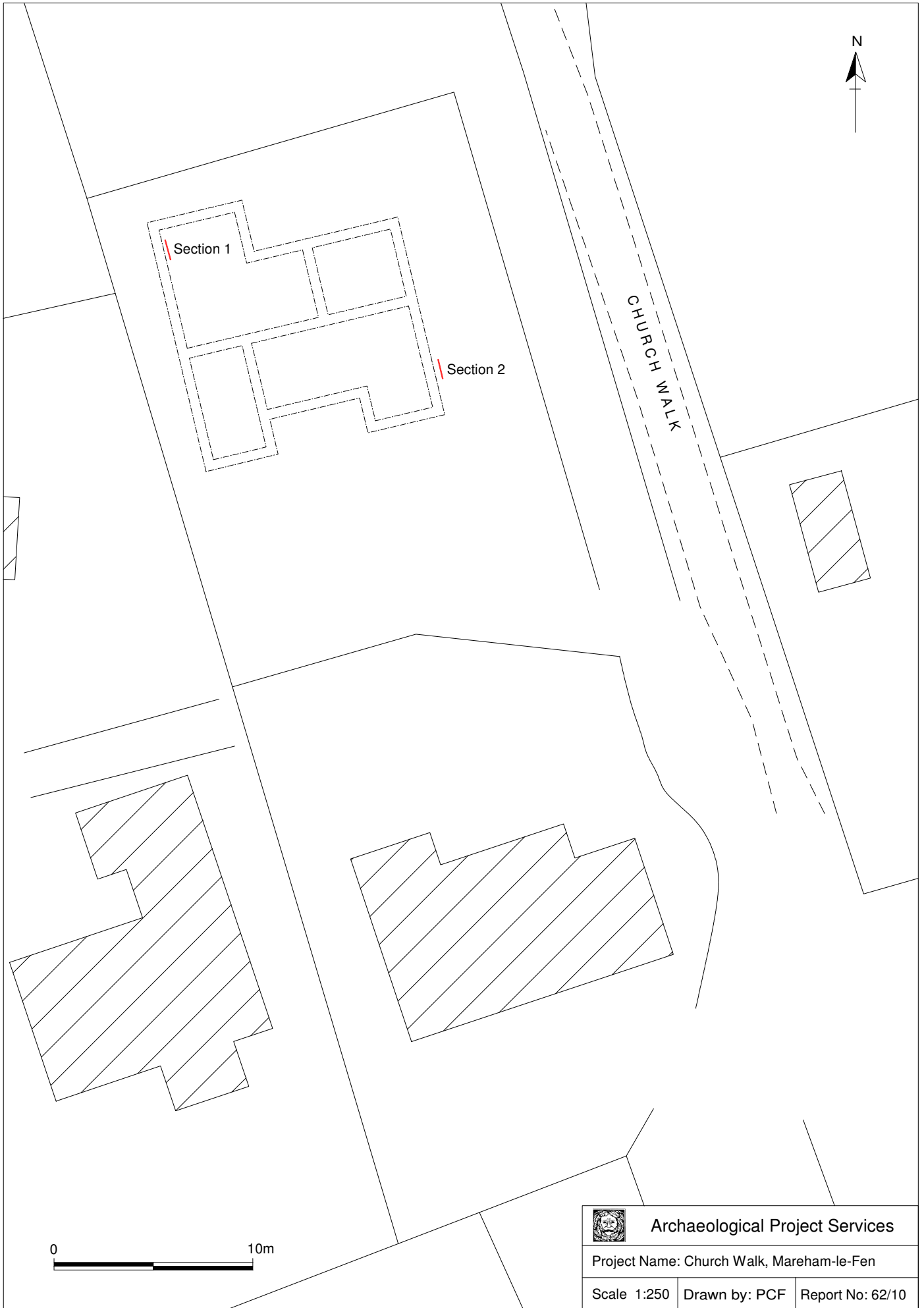
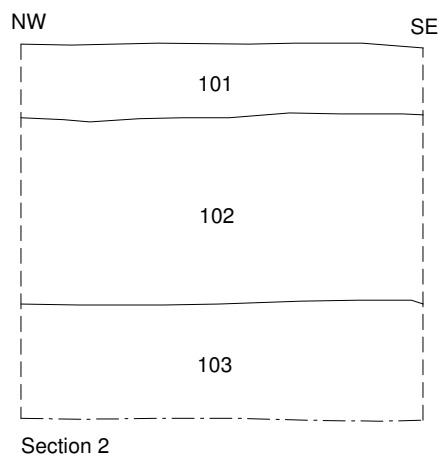
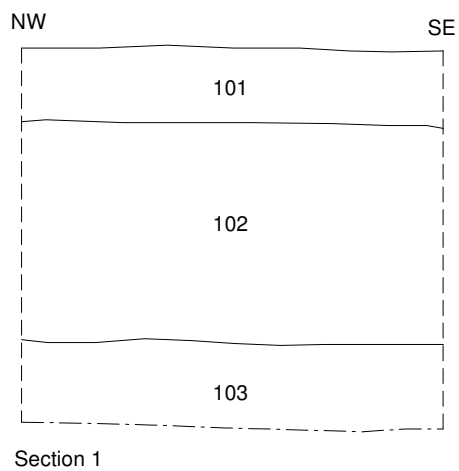


Figure 3 - Plan of the development showing section locations



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Figure 4 - Sections 1 and 2



Plate 1 – General view over the development looking southeast



Plate 2 - Section 1, looking northeast



Plate 3 – Section 2, looking northeast

Appendix 1

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Description	Interpretation
101	Loose mid brown sandy silt, 0.2m thick	Topsoil
102	Loose dark brownish grey sandy silt, 0.6m thick	Subsoil
103	Soft mid yellow orange clayey sand with frequent gravel, >0.31m thick	Natural deposit

Appendix 2

GLOSSARY

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 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).
Layer	A layer is a term 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.
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 1 st 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 by tribes from northern Germany.

Appendix 3

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

3	Context records
1	Photographic record sheet
2	Sheets of scale drawings
1	Stratigraphic matrix

All primary records and finds are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services
The Old School
Cameron Street
Heckington
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 9RW

The ultimate destination of the project archive is:

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

Accession Number: LCNCC: 2010.93

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: MFCW10

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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