
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND
RECORDING OF TRIAL PITS AT
THE MARKET PLACE,
BOSTON,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(BOMP 10)**

**Work Undertaken For
Lincolnshire County Council**

August 2010

Report Compiled by
Paul Cope-Faulkner BA (Hons)

National Grid Reference: TF 328 441
The Collection Accession No: LCNCC: 2010.105
OASIS Record No: archaeol1-81486

APS Report No. **79/10**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES**



Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Plates

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

Appendices

1. Context descriptions
2. The Finds *by Alex Beeby, 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 Trial pit location plan
- Figure 4 Trial pit sections

List of Plates

- Plate 1 View of the Market Place
- Plate 2 The Market Place
- Plate 3 Trial Pit 1
- Plate 4 Trial Pit 2
- Plate 5 Trial Pit 3
- Plate 6 Trial Pit 4
- Plate 7 Trial Pit 5

1. SUMMARY

A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken at the Market Place, Boston, Lincolnshire. The investigations recorded the excavation of Trial Pits in advance of the redevelopment of the Market Place.

The Market Place lies at the core of the medieval (AD 1066-1540) town and is dominated by the 14th century church of St Botolph. The Market Place is first mentioned in the early 13th century and has continued as the social and economic centre of the town to the present day.

The investigation revealed a sequence of dumped deposits containing medieval and post-medieval finds. A brick surface was encountered in the northernmost trial pit and may relate to a former structure shown within the Market Place on a map of 1741.

Finds retrieved during the investigation include medieval pottery and roof tile. Post-medieval pottery and brick was also found along with a small assemblage of animal bone and shell.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Lincolnshire County Council to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during the excavation of Trial Pits in advance of future resurfacing works at the Market Place, Boston, Lincolnshire. The investigation was carried out on the 12th 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

Boston is situated 45km southeast of Lincoln and approximately 7km northwest from the coast of The Wash, in the Fenland of south Lincolnshire. Bisected by the River Witham, the town is located in the administrative district of Boston, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The site is located 100m southeast of the centre of the town as defined by the parish church of St Botolph at National Grid Reference TF 328 441 (Fig 2). The Market Place lies at heights of between 5.3m and 5.8m OD on a levee of the River Witham. Land slopes gently down to the east, away from the river.

Local soils have not been mapped as it is within an urban area. However, local soils are likely to be of the Wisbech Series, typically coarse silty calcareous alluvial gley soils (Robson 1990, 36). These soils are developed upon a drift geology of younger marine alluvium which in turn overlies glacial till that seals a solid geology of Jurassic Ampthill Clay (BGS 1995).

2.3 Archaeological Setting

There is little evidence for prehistoric remains in the Boston area as the land surface of that period is now buried by later alluvium (peats, silts, clays *etc.*). A Neolithic stone axe, found within the town, is considered to be a later import.

Stratified Romano-British deposits have been found at Boston Grammar School, 200m to the southeast, where occupation remains of the period were recorded 1.4m below the present ground surface (Palmer-Brown 1996, 5).

Boston is not mentioned in the Domesday Survey of c. 1086. However, the survey records two churches and two fisheries in Skirbeck, southeast of the current town (Foster and Longley 1976). One of these

churches was granted to St. Mary's abbey, York in 1089. In 1130, Boston received its first mention when it was referred to as 'Botulvestan' (Dover 1972, 1).

A market at Boston is first mentioned between 1125 and 1135 when the monks of St Mary's Abbey were allowed to trade on all their land (*ibid.* 21). This early market may have centred on the cemetery of the church and later extended to encompass the present Market Place. The first mention of the Market Place occurs in the early 13th century (Harden 1978, 20). The market would originally have comprised small temporary booths which were later replaced by more permanent buildings, the locations of which are preserved in the tenements to the south of the church and west of the Market Place (Roffe 2000).

A sewage trench excavated through the Market Place in 1965 identified a damp 'peaty' layer at *c.* 1m depth that contained waste leather fragments as well as cattle horn cores, wood fragments and pottery of the later medieval period. A possible road surface was also identified (Healey 1966). Further fragments of preserved leather were retrieved during works in the Market Place in 1987.

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

Five Trial Pits were excavated by hand at pre-determined positions around the Market Place (Fig. 3). Following excavation, the sides of each pit were cleaned and 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 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 in Trial Pits 2, 3 and 5 was a layer of bluish grey silt (005). This measured in excess of 0.25m thick (Fig. 4). Pottery of 13th – 14th century date was retrieved from Trial Pit 2.

Located at the base of Trial Pit 4 was a layer of soft black organic silt (006). This was over 0.19m thick and contained medieval roof tile and post-medieval brick as well as cattle and oyster remains.

Overlying (005) in Trial Pit 1 was a layer of compacted reddish brown brick and silt (004). This may represent a former surface and was 0.12m thick. Brick from this deposit was of 18th – 20th century date.

Sealing (005) in Trial Pit 5 was a mixed layer of dark grey to greyish blue clayey silt (007). Interpreted as made-ground this

was 0.26m thick and contained 18th – 19th century pottery.

Sealing all the above deposits and representing the earliest layer in Trial Pit 1 was a layer of crushed stone (003) overlain by sand (002) that formed the make-up deposits for the block paved surface (001) of the Market Place.

6. DISCUSSION

The earliest deposits comprise bluish grey and black organic silts. Although medieval, 13th – 14th century, pottery was recovered from the blue grey silt these deposits are probably not of great antiquity and may have been formed by the dumping of alluvium to raise the ground level. The organic silt has similarities to that recorded in previous work in the Market Place, though finds retrieved from this are medieval and post-medieval date.

A possible brick surface was encountered in Trial Pit 1. If this interpretation is correct, it may relate to the former Meat Cross which stood in the approximate location and is recorded on 18th century plans of the town (Hall 1741).

Modern surfacing has probably truncated the upper sequence of these deposits to depths of between 0.36m and 0.6m below the current ground surface.

Finds comprise medieval pottery and roof tile, post-medieval pottery and brick as well as sheep/goat, cattle and oyster remains.

7. CONCLUSION

A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken at the Market Place, Boston, as the site lay at the core of the medieval town.

However, no medieval deposits were identified. Instead, a sequence of dumped layers of post-medieval origin was recorded along with a brick surface. These were sealed beneath modern road surface deposits.

Finds retrieved from the investigation comprise pottery and brick/tile of medieval to post-medieval date and a small collection of faunal remains.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Ms A Bond, Senior Projects 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. Jenny Young, the Boston District Planning Archaeologist, kindly allowed access to the parish files and library maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

9. PERSONNEL

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

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

BGS, 1995 *Boston; Solid and drift edition*, 1:50 000 map sheet **128**

Dover, P., 1972, *The Early Medieval History of Boston, AD 1086-1400*, History of Boston Series No. 2 (2nd edition)

Foster, CW and Longley, T (eds), 1976 *The Lincolnshire Domesday and the Lindsey Survey*, The Lincoln Record

Society 19

Hall, R, 1741 *Plan of Boston*

Harden, G, 1978 *Medieval Boston and its Archaeological Implications*

Healey, RH, 1966 'Notes on some Mediaeval Finds in Boston Market Place, October 1965', *Boston and South Lincolnshire Archaeology Group Annual Report 1965-66*

Palmer-Brown, C., 1996, *Boston Grammar School Archaeological Evaluation Report*, unpublished PCA report

Robson, JD, 1990 *Soils of the Boston and Spalding District*, Memoirs of the Soil Survey of Great Britain

Roffe, D, 2000 *Boston*, unpublished manuscript

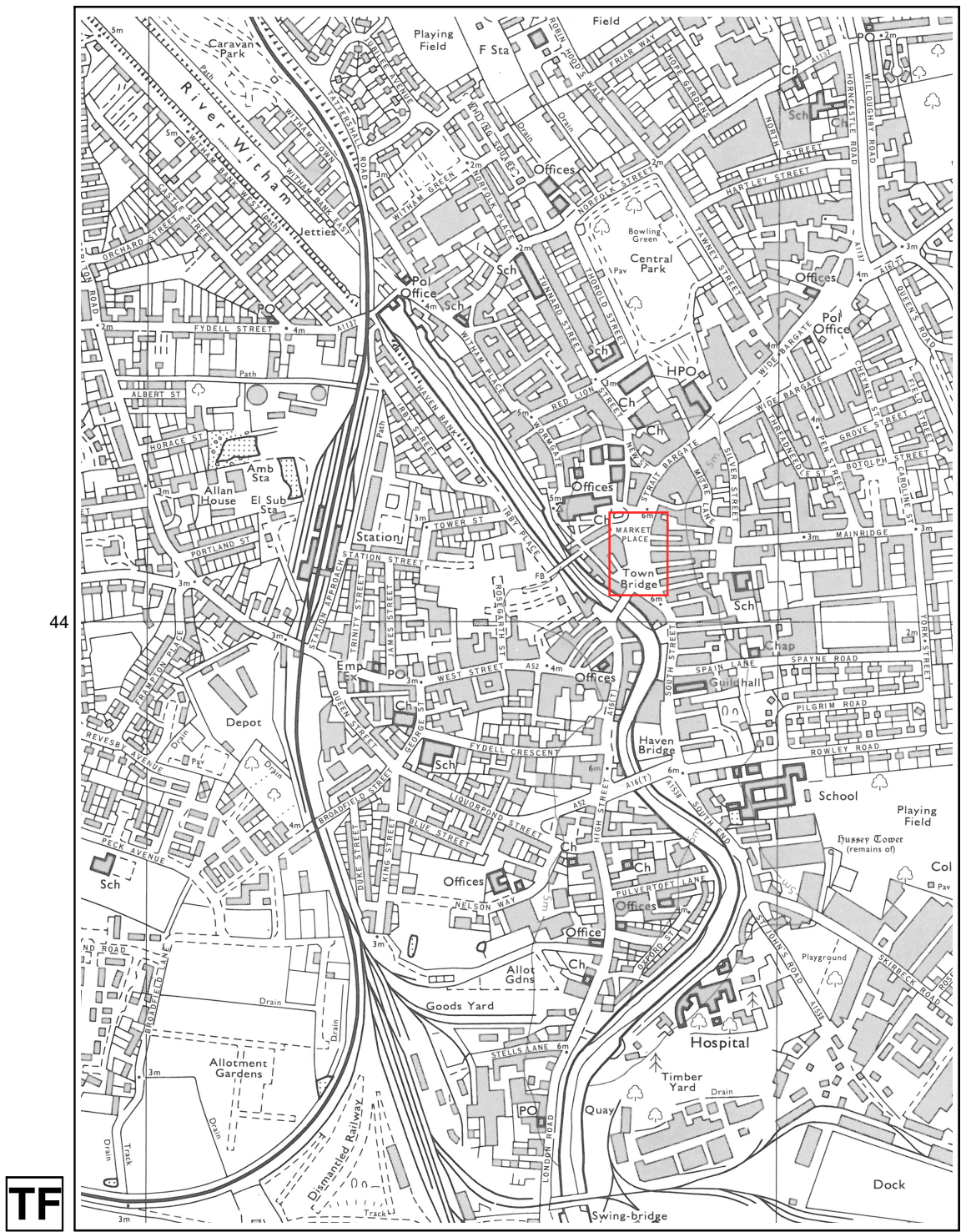
11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services

BGS British Geological Survey



Figure 1 - General location plan



44

32

33

 Area detailed in Figure 3

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. AL5041A0001




	Archaeological Project Services
Project Name: Market Place, Boston BOMP10	
Scale 1:10000	Drawn by: PCF Report No: 79/10

Figure 2 - Site location plan

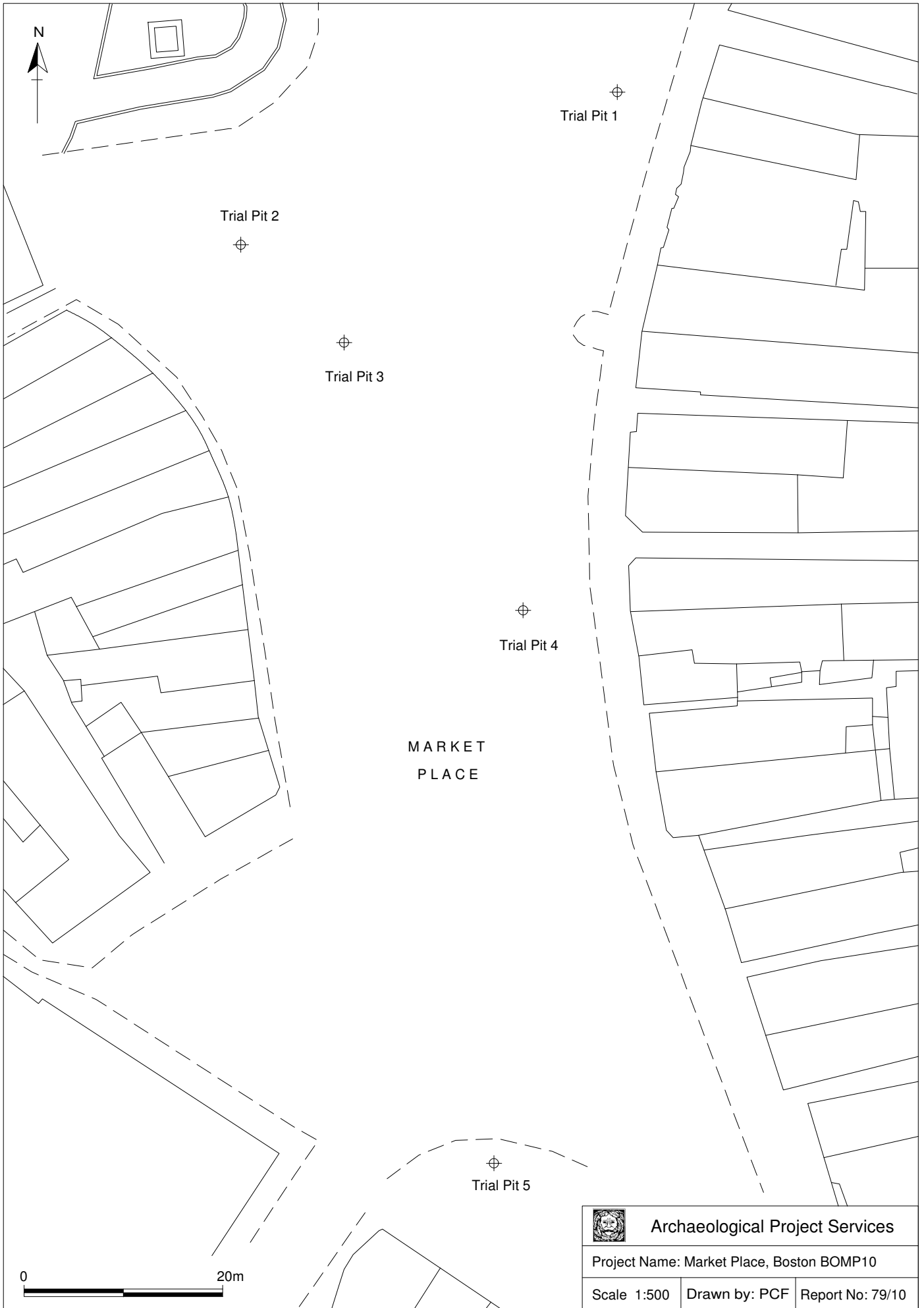
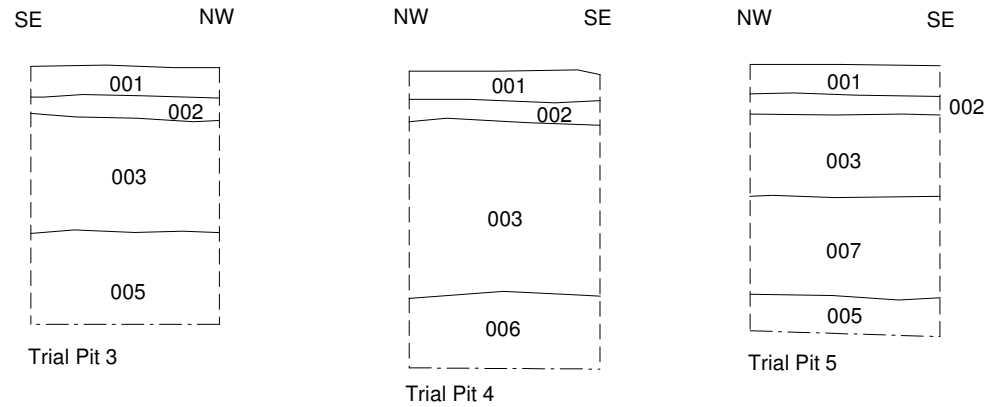
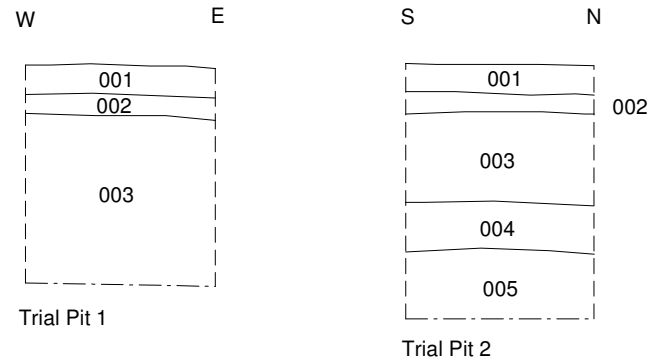


Figure 3 - Trial Pit location plan




		
Archaeological Project Services		
Project Name: Market Place, Boston BOMP10		
Scale 1:20	Drawn by: PCF	Report No: 79/10

Figure 4 - Trial Pit sections



Plate 1 – View of the Market Place, looking north



Plate 2 – The Market Place, looking south



Plate 3 – Trial Pit 1



Plate 4 – Trial Pit 2



Plate 5 – Trial Pit 3



Plate 6 – Trial Pit 4



Plate 7 – Trial Pit 5

Appendix 1

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Description	Interpretation
001	Block paving slabs	Modern surface
002	Loose yellow sand, 50mm thick	Make-up for (001)
003	Compacted mid yellowish grey stone fragments, 0.25m thick	Make-up for (001)
004	Compacted mid reddish brown brick fragments and silt, 0.12m thick	Possible surface
005	Soft mid bluish grey silt, 0.25m thick	Dumped deposit
006	Soft black organic silt, 0.19m thick	Dumped deposit
007	Soft dark grey to greyish blue clayey silt, 0.26m thick	Dumped deposit

Appendix 2

THE FINDS

POST ROMAN POTTERY

By Alex Beeby and Anne Boyle

Introduction

All the material was recorded at archive level in accordance with the guidelines laid out in Slowikowski *et al.* (2001) and to conform to Lincolnshire County Council's *Archaeology Handbook*. The pottery codenames (Cname) are in accordance with the Post Roman pottery type series for Lincolnshire, as published in Young *et al.* (2005). A total of two sherds from two vessels, weighing 10 grams was recovered from the site.

Methodology

The material was laid out and viewed in context order. Sherds were counted and weighed by individual vessel within each context. The pottery was examined visually and using x20 magnification. This information was then added to an Access database. An archive list of the pottery is included in Table 1 below. The pottery ranges in date from the medieval to the early modern period.

Condition

Both sherds are fragmentary but relatively fresh.

Results

Table 1, Post Roman Pottery Archive

Context	Cname	Sub Fabric	Form	NoS	NoV	W(g)	Part	description	date
005 TP2	BOSTTT		Jug or Jar	1	1	9	BS		EM13th-EM14th
007	CREA		Flat	1	1	1	Rim		ML18th-EM19th

Provenance

Single sherds were recovered from dumped deposits (005) and (007).

Range

There are two sherds, one is from a locally produced, medieval Toynton type (BOSTTT) jug or jar and the second is from flat vessel in early modern Creamware (CREA).

Potential

There is limited potential for further work. The modern sherd can be discarded, whilst the medieval sherd could be retained as part of the site archive.

Summary

Two sherds of pottery were recovered during the watching brief, one is medieval in date and one dates to the early modern period.

CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL

By Alex Beeby and 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 8 fragments of ceramic building material, weighing 1004 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 2 below.

Condition

Most of the material is abraded and two fragments are burnt and sooted. A single piece is overfired, although this is probably the result of post depositional burning rather than an accident of production. Both of the large brick fragments recovered have mortared surfaces.

Results

Table 2, Ceramic Building Material Archive

Cxt	Cname	Fabric	Description	Date	NoF	W(g)
004	BRK	Calcareous	Abraded; dark mortar dep on one surface; struck upper; flint; slop moulded; 66mm deep; fenland type	18th-20th	1	532
006	BRK	Calcareous	Abraded; Mortar containing shell adhered to all surfs; sand moulded; missing upper- thin?	16th-18th?	1	350
006	PNR	OX/R/OX; medium coarse sandy	Burnt; sooted; joining; FLR	14th-16th	2	83
006	PNR	OX/R/OX; medium sandy	Burnt or over fired; flint; FLR	14th-16th	1	30
007	CBM		Flakes; single unsanded surface; abraded; suitable for discard	Roman or Post Roman	3	9
Total					8	1004

Provenance

Ceramic building material was recovered from layers (004), (006) and (007).

Range

There is a limited range within this assemblage, including pieces from two locally produced, post-medieval to early modern bricks (BRK) and fragments from two medieval tiles (PNR). There are also three flakes from unidentified ceramic objects (CBM), probably pieces of brick or tile. The bricks are locally produced 'fenland' types, made in a silty calcareous clay. This kind of brick is common in south Lincolnshire, from the medieval to the early modern period. The tiles are flat roofing types in sandy fabrics. One of these pieces has flint inclusions, suggesting that it is probably a regional import, perhaps from Norfolk or Cambridgeshire.

Potential

There is little potential for further work. The medieval material should be retained as part of the site archive, whilst the remainder is suitable for discard.

Summary

Eight fragments of ceramic building material were recovered during the watching brief. Two of these are probably medieval in date whilst the remainder are later or undated.

FAUNAL REMAINS

By Paul Cope-Faulkner

Introduction

A total of 7 (274g) fragments of faunal remains were recovered from stratified contexts.

Provenance

The bone was retrieved from a possible surface (004) and a dumped deposit (006).

Condition

The overall condition of the remains was good to moderate.

Results

Table 3, Fragments Identified to Taxa

Cxt	Taxon	Element	Number	W (g)	Comments
004	sheep/goat	metatarsus	2	10	Both join
006	Cattle	Humerus	3	242	

	oyster	shell	2	22	
--	--------	-------	---	----	--

Summary

The faunal remains probably represent food waste. As a small assemblage, the potential is limited, though should be retained as part of the site archive.

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
004	18th-20th	Based on CBM
005	EM13th-EM14th	Based on a Single Sherd
006	16th-18th?	Based on CBM
007	ML18th-EM19th	Based on a Single Sherd

ABBREVIATIONS

ACBMG	Archaeological Ceramic Building Materials Group
BS	Body sherd
CBM	Ceramic Building Material
CXT	Context
NoF	Number of Fragments
NoS	Number of sherds
NoV	Number of vessels
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>
- Slowikowski, AM, Nenk, B and Pearce, J, 2001 *Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics*, Medieval Pottery Research Group Occasional Paper 2
- Young, J, Vince, AG and Nailor, V, 2005 *A Corpus of Saxon and Medieval Pottery from Lincoln* (Oxford)

Appendix 3

GLOSSARY

Alluvium	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.
Boulder Clay	A deposit formed after the retreat of a glacier. Also known as till, this material is generally unsorted and can comprise of rock flour to boulders to rocks of quite substantial size.
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).
Dumped deposits	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.
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.
Neolithic	The 'New Stone Age' period, part of the prehistoric era, dating from approximately 4500-2250 BC.
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 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 4

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

7	Context records
1	Photographic record sheet
1	Sheet of scale drawings
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: LCNCC: 2010.105

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: BOMP 10

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.