LAND AT RUSTON WAY/TRITTON ROAD, LINCOLN

SCHEME OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING

NGR:	SK 96820 70906
Planning Ref.:	2013/1297/F
PCAS job no.	1223
Site code:	RWLM 14
Archive acc. no.:	2014.83

Report prepared for

Stem Architects Ltd.

by

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Summary

Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out during the construction of an 8-storey student residential development on land at the junction of Ruston Way and Tritton Road in the city of Lincoln.

The site lies outside the historic city, within the flood plain of the River Witham in an area that is believed to have been wetland until the early 19th century. However, archaeological investigations in its vicinity identified a sand 'island' below the wetland deposits that appears to have been occupied during the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods, suggesting that remnants of prehistoric activity may also be present on this site.

Following drainage and reclaimation, the site and the land in its neighbourhood were probably cultivated, before being taken over by industrial and railway development in the later 19th century.

No archaeological features were observed during the course of this monitoring project.

Figure 1: Site location plan at scale 1:25,000. The site is marked in red. OS mapping © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. PCAS licence no. 100049278.

1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd. (PCAS) was commissioned by Stem Architects Ltd. to carry out a scheme of archaeological monitoring and recording on all development groundworks associated with redevelopment on land at the junction of Ruston Way and Tritton Road in the city of Lincoln.

Previous archaeological investigations in the vicinity of the site have revealed evidence of buried prehistoric land surfaces. Therefore, the City Heritage Officer and the Acting Archaeological Advisor recommended that an archaeological condition of the planning permission would best be fulfilled by a scheme of monitoring and recording during redevelopment groundworks.

2.0 Site location and description (figs. 1 & 2)

The Gateway development site is situated on the west side of the large traffic roundabout forming the junction of Tritton Road, Ruston Way, Brayford Way and Rope Walk, on the southern margin of Lincoln city centre, to the west of the River Witham and the south of the Brayford Pool.

The site lies at the northern edge of the 'Tritton Road Industrial' Character Area, directly adjoining the neighbouring 'Lincoln University South' Character Area to the north. The townscape assessment of the 'Tritton Road Industrial' Character Area notes that it consists of *'a large edge of city centre mixed-use area that extends either side of Tritton Road, one of the main arterial roads into and out of the city. The area's former rural and wetland character was initially superseded by 19th century industrial growth, which itself is becoming increasingly replaced with commercial, and more recently residential, developments. Little of the area's rural character survives, and the majority of 19th century industry has been overwritten by modern commercial and residential development. Nevertheless, the townscape retains many elements of its former rural and industrial uses, which contribute to a complex and evolving townscape'* (CLC, 2009a), while the 'Lincoln University South' Character Area is described as *'made up of a series of buildings in a post-modern architectural style unified by architectural style, repetition of materials and large building footprints. Much of the land in the Character Area is occupied by the large modernist and post-modern buildings that make up the campus of the University of Lincoln, established in 1996... The area also contains a modern office block and a large complex of private student accommodation'* (CLC, 2009b). The site is not within any of the City's Conservation Areas (CLC, 2012).

3.0 Geology and topography

The site lies within the valley of the River Witham, on the area of flat, low-lying, recently reclaimed land surrounding the confluence of the Witham and the Foss Dyke. The area is typically less than 5m above Ordnance Datum sea level.

The drift geology in the area is recorded as alluvium laid down along the course of the River Witham, overlying a solid geology of Lower Lias clay (BGS, 1973).

4.0 Planning background

Planning permission was granted by the City of Lincoln Council on 7th February 2014 for the construction of an 8-storey building, to accommodate 458 bedrooms within 77 student apartments, with retail, restaurant and office space on the ground floor. This permission was granted subject to conditions, of which Condition 11 required the implementation of an appropriate programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation approved by the City of Lincoln Council as Local Planning Authority (planning application no. 2013/1297/F).

5.0 Archaeological and historical background

An archaeological evaluation in advance of the construction of University buildings 300m to the north-east of the site, on the opposite side of the roundabout, retrieved some 800 worked flints from a buried sand ridge (LHD ref. 7932). Geotechnical investigation indicated that a sand island had been present in this area during the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods, later to be inundated and sealed by organic deposits. Archaeological investigations at Ruston Way Business Park, to the west of the present site, also indicated the presence of buried prehistoric land surfaces (Acting Archaeological Advisor for Lincoln City Council, pers. comm.).

Up until the beginning of the 19th century, the majority of the Tritton Road Industrial Character Area was wetland, being part of an extensive floodplain to the south of the Foss Dyke and to the west of the River Witham. The wetlands were an important food resource for the city from at least as far back as Roman times, providing both fish and waterfowl.

Wetland either side of High Street (to the east of the Character Area) was consolidated in successive stages between the Roman military occupation (1st century AD) and the mid-18th century. Alongside other factors, the process of reclamation culminated in the current course of the River Witham, which forms much of the eastern boundary of the Character Area. Unlike the land immediately to the west of High Street, it is likely that much of the land within the Character Area remained undeveloped as part of the river's floodplain.

Much of the Character Area was probably enclosed during the early 19th century: between 1804 and 1816, wetland to the west of the Witham was drained by Lord Monson, who subsequently enclosed the land and established tenant farmers. Few of the field boundaries that were laid out during this period survive in the current townscape, as much of the formerly rural area has been overwritten by later industrial development.

As Lincoln prospered and grew during the 18th and 19th centuries, there was an increasing demand for land for industrial development. Although much of the area remained open until the late Victorian/Edwardian period, the Character Area was instrumental in providing an undeveloped access point into the centre of Lincoln for railways, whose construction proved to be the catalyst for the rapid industrial and consequently residential expansion of Lincoln. Railways provided a new transport mechanism, and open land within the Character Area, with its easy accessibility to the railways as well as the river, rapidly became developed. Only a handful of the industrial buildings within the Character Area survive from this period of expansion. During the 20th century, open land in the south of the area was developed, and existing industrial sites were expanded. Tritton Road was built in 1967 creating a new 'spine' for development in the area, and emphasising the dominance of the transportation of goods by road. The area's proximity to the city centre has led to its regeneration during the Modern period, initially for large-scale retail centres typical of out-of-town shopping parks. Most recently areas have been redeveloped for city centre services, as well as for housing such as along Ruston Way (CLC, 2009a).

To the north of the site, the Lincoln University South Character Area developed in a similar way. The Great Northern Railway acquired part of the site of the earlier medieval Holmes Common land in 1849 and, initially, part of the Great Northern line crossed the area. This survives as the current railway line. Between 1907 and 1938 the railway expanded to the south as a goods yard and most of the northern part of the Character Area was covered by tracks, sidings and associated structures. The area occupied by the railway grew smaller until the site was acquired by the University. The railway line still runs across the north of the site. The rear of the former engine shed, now a bar and student union called the Engine Shed, marks the eastern boundary of this area, along with the rear of the former Great Central Goods and Grain Warehouse, now the University library (CLC, 2009b).

Two historic industrial sites are recorded directly to the south and south-west of the current development site. The late 19th-century Poppletons/Lindum Confectionery Works was demolished in the 1970s (LHD ref. 6319), but the Boultham Works, built in the late 19th century as a leather factory, is still in operation, now manufacturing polymer products, and retains some of its historic buildings (LHD ref. 6257).

5.1 Methodology

Ground reduction works occurred prior to the commencement of the archaeological monitoring, however modern debris was still visible. Excavations for the removal of a septic tank on 22/05/14 were carried out by a 360 excavator with a flat bladed bucket. This was observed and recorded photographically, but the soft ground conditions dictated that it was unsafe to enter and record the exposed section in detail (plate 2).

PCAS Ltd. staff were recalled to the site on 01/07/14 to record the excavation of footings; however on arrival it was observed that the majority of footings had already been excavated and had been partially filled with concrete. A representative section of the layers still visible was recorded (plate 3). Subsequently a site plan and further representative sections were recorded on 02/07/14.

All features and deposits observed were recorded on standard PCAS context recording sheets, and the progress of the groundworks noted on a standard PCAS site diary sheet. Sample sections were drawn at intervals at a scale of 1:20, and plotted on a base plan. A colour slide and digital photographic record was maintained: a selection from this is reproduced as Appendix 1.

6.0 Results

Initial work observed the excavation and removal of an existing septic tank; these excavations were 3.0m deep. Due to the soft ground conditions and level of disturbance, it was deemed unsafe to enter and record a detailed section. Dark soils of approximately 1.5m depth were observed to overlie a dark peat layer, which in turn covered light yellow-brown natural sands at 2.0m below ground level (plate 3).

At the southern extent of the footings, Representative Section 1 recorded modern made ground (100) overlying plastic terram sheeting (101), which in turn overlay a black silty deposit (102). The base of the footing was not visible, as much of the site had been concreted prior to archaeological observation; the depth of the footings to the south of the site was c. 0.8m (after cement was poured and set). From deposit (102), modern debris, including a ferrous iron strip and roof slate, were recovered; probably indicative of demolition activity. Animal bone also recovered from context (102).

Representative Section 2 was recorded in the location of a proposed lift shaft and had a maximum depth of 1.5m. Deposit (102) was observed to overlie dark black silty sand (105) which in turn overlay demolition layer (106). Both (105) and (106) were cut by feature [107] - a construction cut containing a modern back fill (108) and ceramic drain (109). Deposit (104) was observed to overlie construction trench [107] and deposit (105). Nothing of archaeological significance was noted in this area of the site.

In the northerly extent of the site, Representative Section 3 demonstrated the footings to be at a depth of 0.88m. Deposit (102) was observed to overlie a concrete layer (110), which in turn sealed a dark black silty sand (111). The latter was determined to be the same as deposit (105) observed in Representative Section 2.

7.0 Conclusion

No significant archaeological features were observed during the monitoring programme. Consistent modern deposits were observed throughout the site: in particular, deposit (102) appeared to indicate a phase of modern demolition, associated with debris such as ferrous iron strips and roof slates. Phases of demolition are noted in the near vicinity (LHD ref. 7528).

8.0 Effectiveness of methodology

The intended methodology set out in the agreed specification for this project would have achieved its primary objective, ensuring that any archaeological remains that might have been present on the site would not have been destroyed unrecorded, while causing the minimum of disruption to the construction process.

9.0 Acknowledgements

PCAS Ltd would like to thank Stem Architects Ltd. for this commission.

10.0 Site Archive

The project archive is currently held at the offices of PCAS Ltd. in Saxilby, Lincolnshire while being prepared for deposition, and will be deposited with the Lincoln City and County Museum ('The Collection') by January 2015, with the exception of the finds, which are to be discarded.

11.0 Bibliography

British Geological Survey, 1973, *Lincoln: England and Wales 1:50,000 Series sheet 114, Solid and Drift Provisional Edition*. BGS, Keyworth, Nottingham.

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City of Lincoln Council (CLC), 2012, *Conservation Areas*, consulted online 01-05-2014 at http://www.lincoln.gov.uk/living-in-lincoln/planning/preserving-heritage-buildings-and-areas/conservation-areas/111586.article

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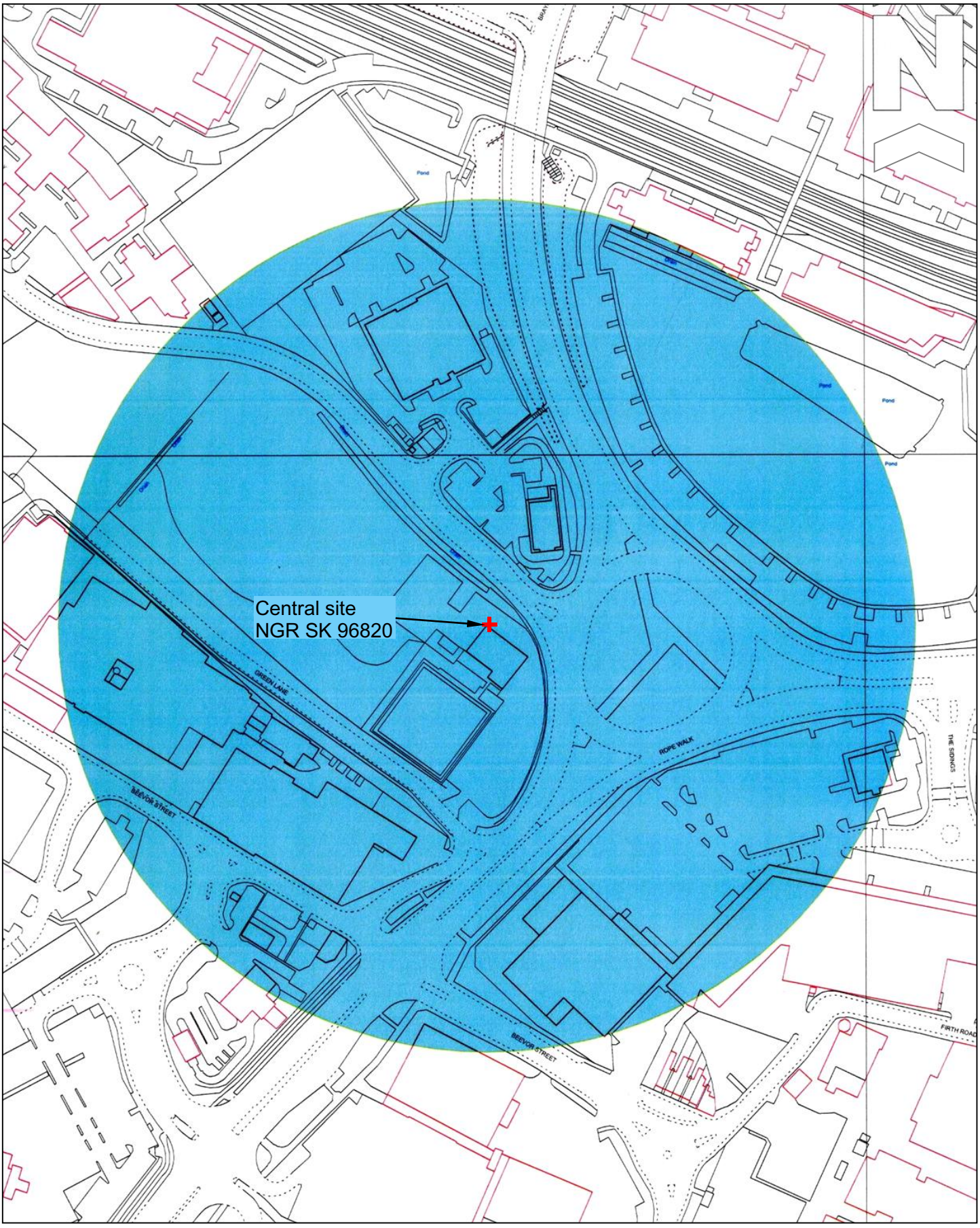
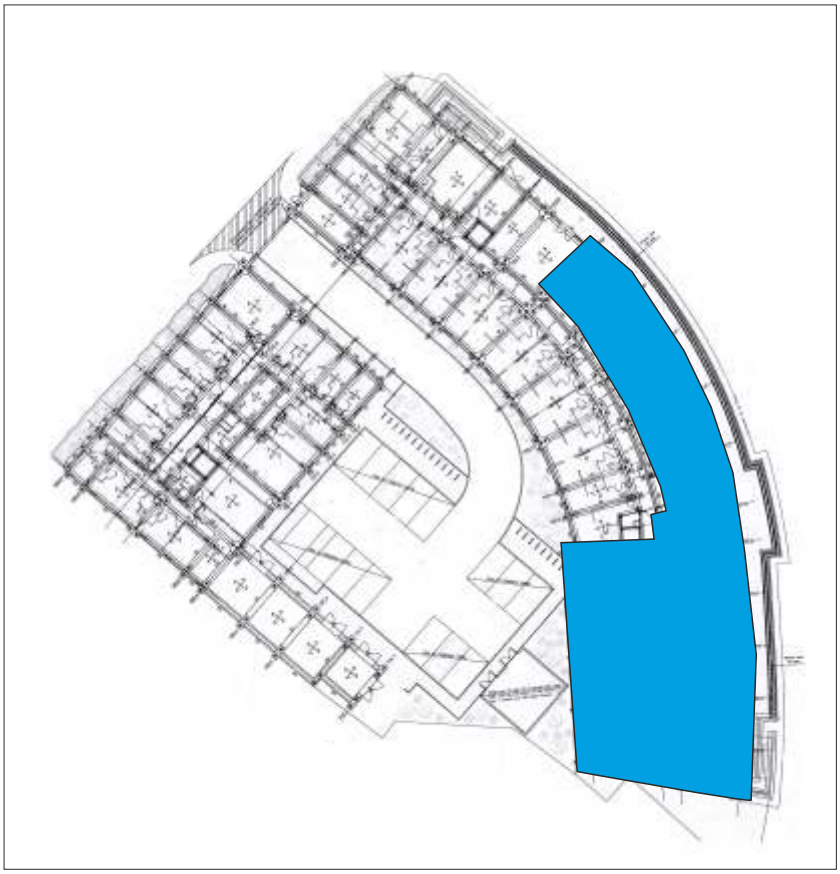


Figure 2: Location plan of the site at scale 1:2500, showing the 200m radius LHD search area (shaded blue). Plan derived from Lincoln City Heritage Database.



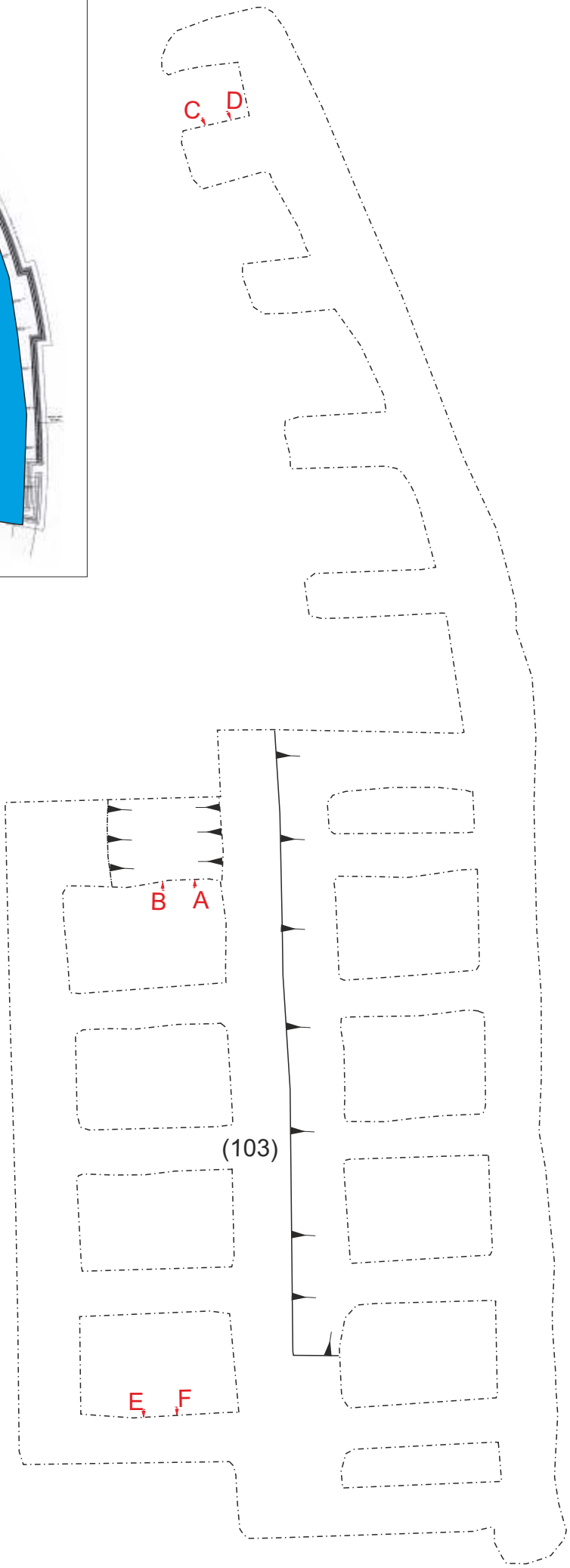


Figure 3: Plan of site at 1:200.
Above: Developer plan showing approximate zone subject to archaeological monitoring. Not to sale.

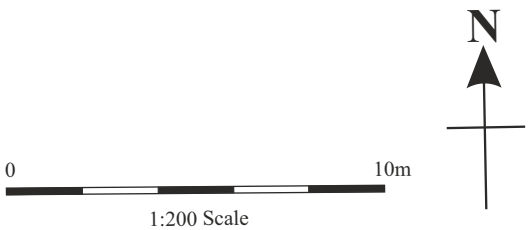
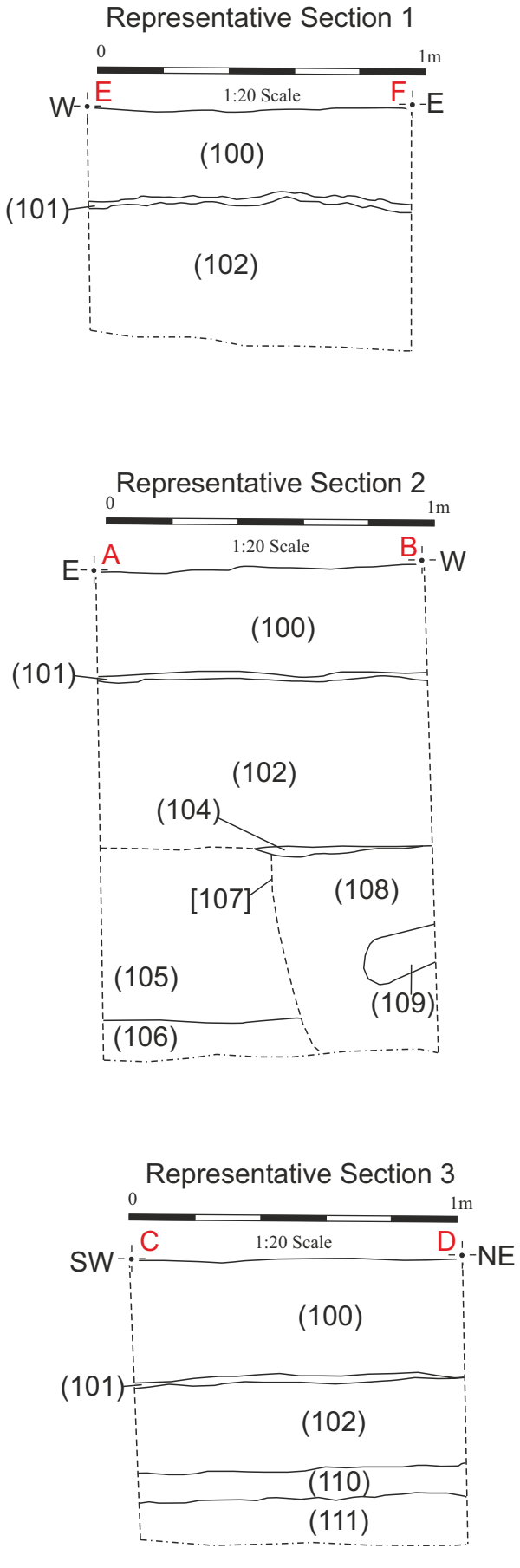


Figure 4: Sections at 1:20



RWLM14 Appendix 1

1. Site on arrival on 22/5/14, looking NE

2. Septic tank excavations, looking SW

3. Representative Section 1, looking north

4. General shot of site on 1/7/14, looking north

5. Representative Section 2, looking south

6. Representative Section 3, looking NW

RWLM14 Appendix 2

Context no.	Type	Description	Dimensions	Finds
100	Layer	Sandy yellow, coarse, friable made-ground with large angular stone inclusions.	D= 30cm	
101	Layer	Black plastic netting/ terram.	D= <1cm	
102	Layer	Black-brown sandy silt with a loose compaction and common inclusions of CBM, glass, metal and occasional bone.	D= 40cm, LoE	Bone
103	Layer	Concrete laid down by contractors.	D= 0.5cm	
104	Layer	Yellow sand with a loose compaction, no inclusions and a clear horizon. Modern.	D=2cm	
105	Layer	Dark black charcoal sand with a firm compaction, no inclusions and a clear horizon.	D= 52cm	
106	Layer	Dark black mixed sand with CBM inclusions, a firm compaction and clear horizon.	D= 12cm	
107	Cut	Not seen in plan, cut has vertical sides and a flat base. Contains modern drain (109). Modern.	D= 60cm	
108	Fill of [107]	Dark black mixed layer of sand and rubble with a firm compaction and diffuse horizon. Modern.	D= 60cm	
109	Fill of [107]	Modern ceramic drain pipe.	D=15cm	
110	Layer	Light yellow-brown concrete with a solid compaction. Modern.	D=10cm	
111	Layer	Dark black charcoal sand with a firm compaction and clear horizon. Similar to (105).	D=16cm	

Appendix 3

Land at Ruston Way/Tritton Road, Lincoln
RWLM14
LCNCC:2014.83

Finds Catalogue

Context	Material	No.	Weight (g)	Description	Date	Action
102	Slate	1	42g	Fragment of roofing slate	Modern	Discard
102	Fe	1	72g	Fe strip, 30mm wide, 470mm long, 1mm thick	Modern	Discard

Appendix 4

Land at Ruston Way/Tritton Road, Lincoln (RWLM 14)

The Animal Bone

By Jennifer Wood

Introduction

A total of 1 (40g) refitted fragments of animal bone were recovered by hand during archaeological works undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Services Ltd at Land at Ruston Way/Tritton Road, Lincoln. The remains were recovered from layer (102), there was no dating available at the time of assessment.

Results

The remains were generally of a good overall condition, averaging at grade 2 on the Lyman criteria (1996).

No evidence of burning, butchery, working or gnawing was noted on the remains.

Table 1, Summary of Identified Bone

Context	Cut	Taxon	Element	Side	Number	Weight	Comments
102	N/A	Large Mammal Size	Rib	X	1	40	Blade broken in three pieces

As can be seen the assemblage was unidentifiable beyond size category.

The assemblage is too small to provide meaningful information on animal husbandry and utilisation on site, save the presence/use of the animals on site.

References

Lyman, R L, 1996 *Vertebrate Taphonomy*, Cambridge Manuals in Archaeology, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Appendix 5: OASIS Summary

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

LAND AT RUSTON WAY/TRITTON ROAD, LINCOLN - Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd

OASIS ID - preconst3-197305

Versions				
View	Version	Completed by	Email	Date
View 1	1	Benedict Wheeliker	ben@pre-construct.co.uk	5 December 2014
View 2	2	Benedict Wheeliker	ben@pre-construct.co.uk	5 January 2015

Completed sections in current version				
Details	Location	Creators	Archive	Publications
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1/1

Validated sections in current version				
Details	Location	Creators	Archive	Publications
No	No	No	No	0/1

File submission and form progress			
Grey literature report submitted?	No	Grey literature report filename/s	
Boundary file submitted?	No	Boundary filename	
HER signed off?		NMR signed off?	

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