Specification for Archaeological Monitoring on Land Adjacent to 5, Stone Gate, Cowbit, Lincolnshire.

Prepared for Mr. Bob Merchant of G. R. Merchant Ltd.

National Grid Reference: TF 2617 1800
Site Code: SGCO17
Accession No: LCNCC: 2017.151
Planning Reference: H01-0769-16

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Non-technical summary

S1 *A scheme of works comprising archaeological monitoring and recording is required during the groundworks pertaining to the construction of a new residential development on land adjacent to 5, Stone Gate, Cowbit, Lincolnshire.*

S2 *The development site is situated within an archaeologically sensitive area and within an area of high archaeological potential. The development site is situated to the east of the medieval parish church and within the historic core of the medieval and post-medieval settlements of Cowbit. It is considered highly likely that archaeological features, deposits, structures and finds associated with these medieval and post-medieval settlements may be encountered on this site. The specific objectives of this archaeological will therefore be to record any archaeological features, deposits, structures or finds associated with this medieval and post-medieval settlement activity*.

S3 *The archaeological monitoring will be undertaken during the groundworks stage of development, which will comprise the mechanical excavation of the foundations and services for the new residential development. Any archaeological features, structures and/or deposits will be recorded in writing, graphically and photographically.*

S3 *On the completion of the monitoring, a report will be produced detailing the results of the archaeological investigation. The report will consist of a narrative supported by illustrations and photographs.*

1. Site location and description [Figures 1-3]

1.1 The development site is situated on land off the southern frontage of Stone Gate and on land adjacent to 5, Stone Gate at National Grid Reference TF 2617 1800 and at a height of approximately 2mAOD. The village of Cowbit is located approximately 5km to the south of Spalding and some 10km to the north east of the town of Market Deeping. The village of Cowbit is within the modern civil parish of the same name, and in the administrative district of South Holland, county of Lincolnshire.

1.2 The development site is located in a flat and low-lying area within the Lincolnshire Fens. The development site is situated on deep calcareous clayey and silty soils of the Wallasea 2 Series, which have developed on marine alluvial deposits known as Terrington Beds. These deposits in turn overlie the solid geology, which comprises Oxford Clays and Kellaway Beds of the Upper Jurassic.

2. Planning background [Figure 4]

2.1 This document comprises a Specification or a written scheme of works for archaeological monitoring and recording which is to be maintained during the groundworks pertaining to the construction of a new residential development on land adjacent to 5, Stone Gate, Cowbit, Lincolnshire (Planning reference: H01-0769-16).

3. Historical and Archaeological Background

3.1 Background research sources were consulted at the Lincolnshire Archives, the Lincoln Local Studies Library and the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Record (HER). A search of the Lincolnshire HER was conducted within a 0.5km radius that was centred on the development site.

3.2 Throughout early prehistory, the area around Cowbit probably consisted of coastal reed swamps and a salt marsh environment through which flowed creeks and the prehistoric River Welland, and was probably uninhabited. There is thus little evidence for earlier prehistoric activity in the Cowbit area, as that former contemporary land surface is now buried beneath substantial and deep later alluvial deposits.

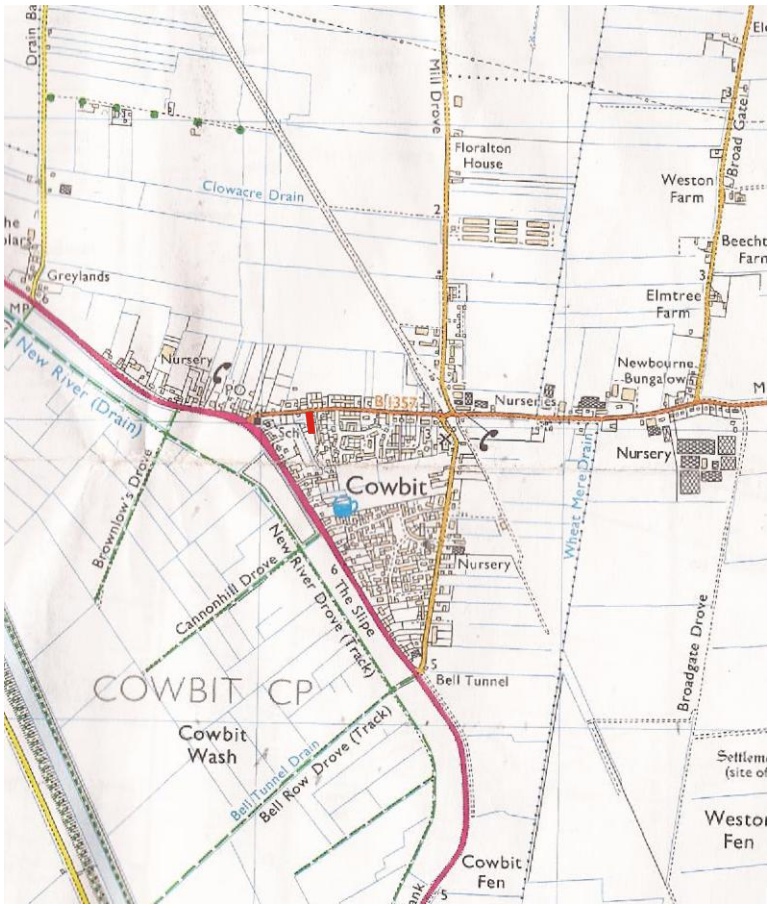


Figure 1: Site location at scale 1:12,500. The site is shown in red. (O.S. copyright licence number 100048723)

3.3 By the Iron Age, the local environment with ready access to both fresh and salt water with readily available local peat resources for fuel was conducive to the manufacture of salt. Salterns thus flourished on the wide levees of the contemporary River Welland and on other major creeks or roddons.

3.5 Iron Age settlement activity in this area is suggested by scatters of contemporary pottery and briquetage and dark or black soilmarks or areas of burning and are sometimes located in close proximity to roddons. This might suggest saltern sites, with which such settlement activity was usually associated. One such probable Iron Age saltern site occurs to the north of Cowbit (HER 23105). This site is indicated on the ground by a dark spoil stain, although no contemporary pottery has been found at this location.

3.6 During the Roman period, salt production tended to drift eastwards due to encroachment of peat from the south west. Roman salterns were established on the wide levees on former courses of the River Welland utilising the same resources as noted earlier. Roman settlement also tended to congregate around these saltern sites. These sites are similarly denoted by close proximity to roddons, and to areas of dark soilmarks, pottery and briquetage scatters and of saltern hearths typified by areas of intense burning activity and red soil stains and areas of darker soil. One such Roman saltern and settlement site is situated to the west of Cowbit and has been plotted from aerial photographic sources (HER 20325).

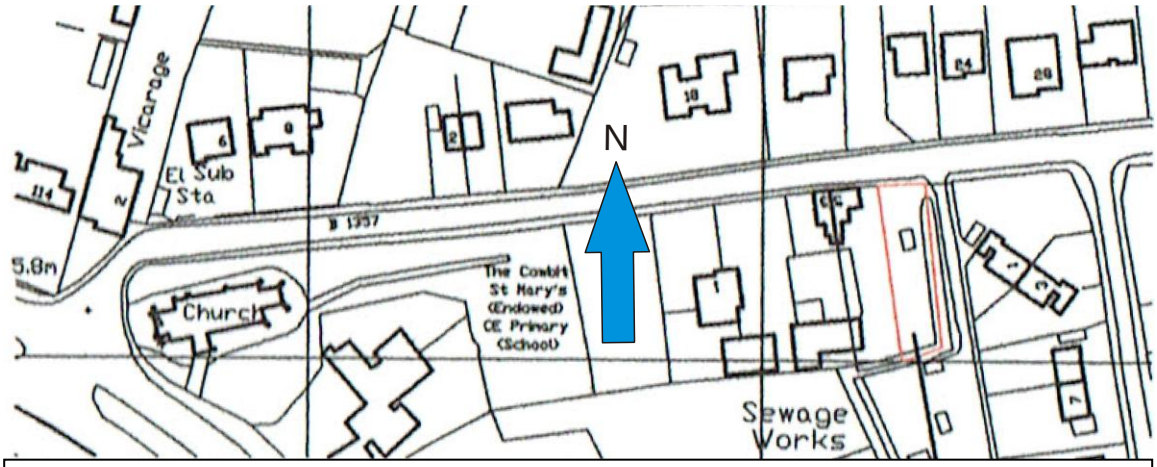


Figure 2: Site location at an original scale of scale 1:1,250, (not to scale), (extract from Architects plan). The site is shown outlined in red.

3.7 The location of the known Roman settlement sites in the area is also typified by the same factors, i.e. they are denoted by pottery scatters, areas of darker soil or soilmarks, by their close proximity to roddons, and also by domestic surface debris such as building material, animal bone etc. One such settlement site occurs to the north of Cowbit (HER 23103). Finds of pottery and animal bone were found on a dark soil stain adjacent to a narrow roddon.

3.8 In the Roman period, the Welland maintained a similar course to that in the Iron Age, but during the late Saxon period, the River Welland was probably realigned and canalised by the monks of Crowland Abbey to pass through the gravel island on which sits the settlement of Crowland. This connected the Welland with the River Nene by means of a channel to the south east and thus created a network of fenland waterways.

3.9 The reclamation of the local low-lying fenland probably began in the late 12th century with the construction of the New Fen Dyke around AD1186-9. By AD1205, a second fen dyke – the Goldyke had been constructed to the south. A further early fen dyke was Stone Gate. The Wheat Mere Drain was also constructed as part of this process, and was first documented in the mid 13th century, when it was referred to as *Wykemere Drain*. These features protected the surrounding low lying and reclaimed lands from periodic winter flooding.

3.10 The settlement of Cowbit itself was founded in the late 13th century as an outlying hamlet of Spalding along Stone Gate and the New Fen Dyke (HER 23106). Cowbit at that time was a remote part of the parish of Spalding. The earliest documentary reference to Cowbit or *Conbith*, *Conbiht* dates from AD1267. Later medieval documentary references variously detail: *Kinbuth* (*c.*AD1331), *Conbyth* (AD1332) and *Conbight* (AD1361). Cowbit is derived from *cor* from the Old English 'cow' and *byht* – a bight or bend. Thus it would appear that the place name has a topographical derivation denoting a bend in the River Welland with nearby pasture for cows. Settlements like Cowbit remained small and clustered around higher embanked ground. The lands to the north of the New Fen Dyke were largely arable in the medieval period. This has been evidenced by widespread finds of contemporary pottery as the result of associated manuring activity.

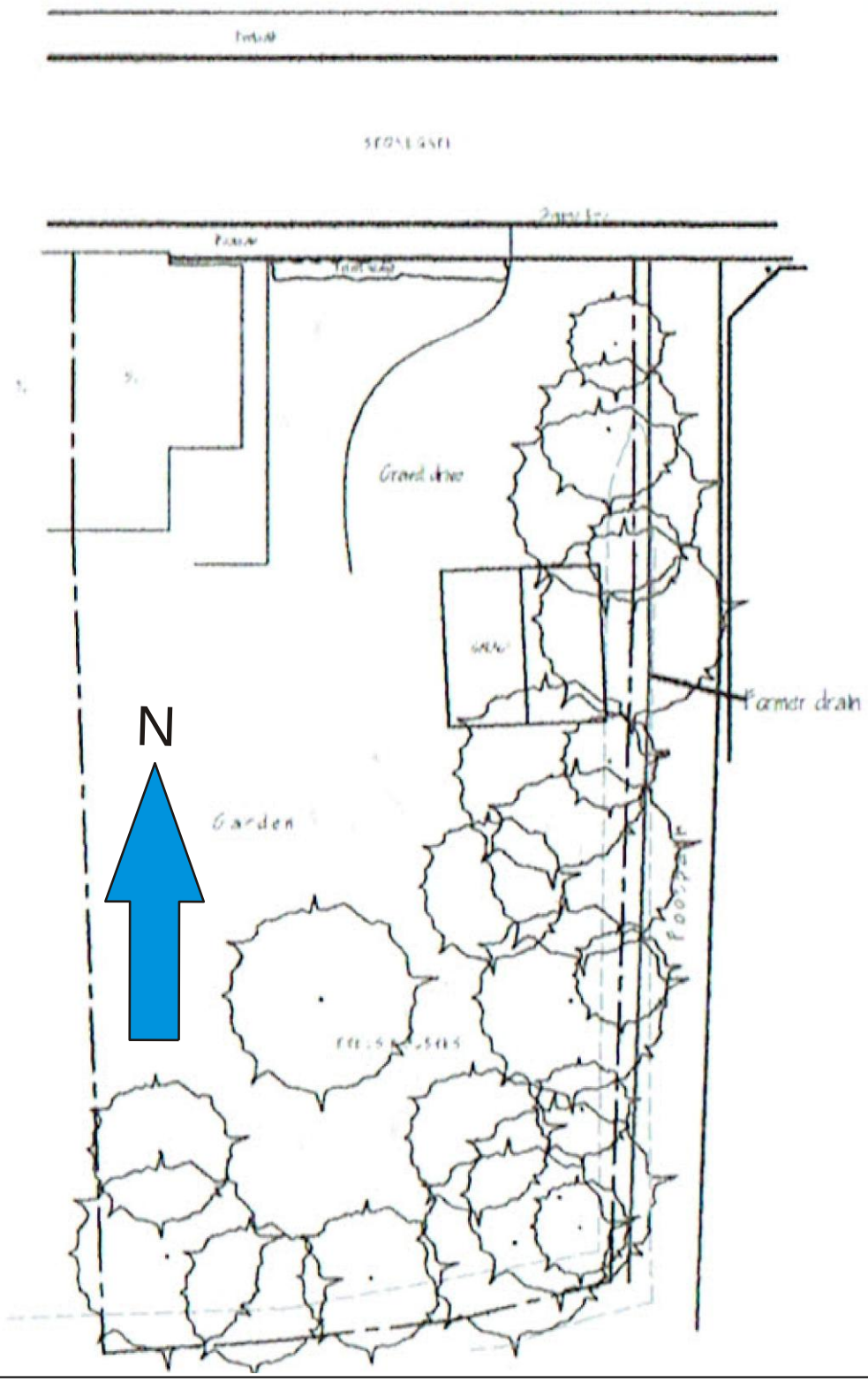


Figure 3: Plan Showing the Existing Layout of the Proposed Development Site at an original scale of scale 1:250, (not to scale), (extract from Architects plan).

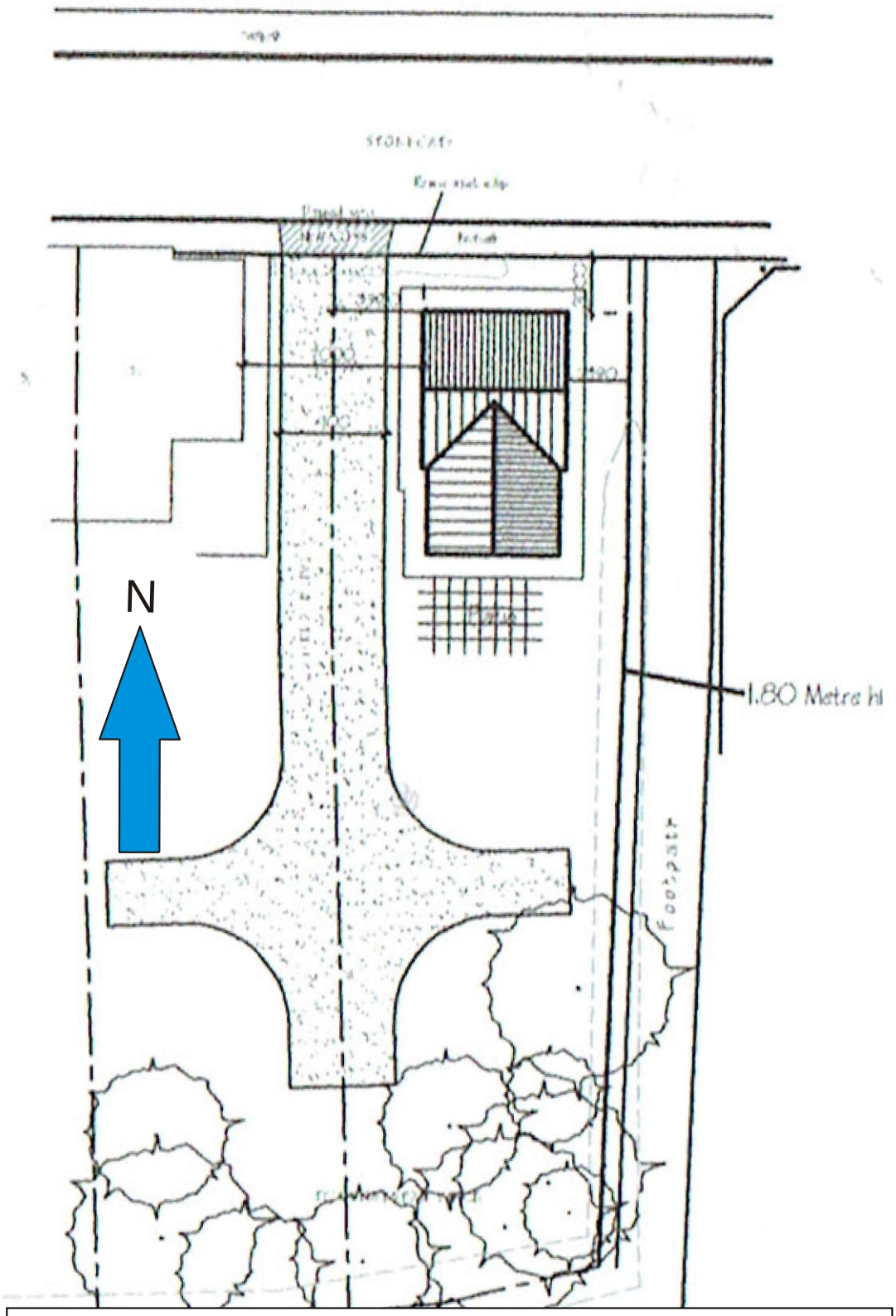


Figure 4: Block Plan Showing the Proposed Layout of the Proposed Development Site at an original scale of scale 1:250, (not to scale), (extract from Architects plan).

3.11 An embankment was also constructed at this time – the Marsh Bank – to the east of the Welland. This was a forerunner of the present Barrier Bank and afforded Cowbit some protection against the waters of the Deeping Fen. The Welland at this time was a sluggish tidal creek prone to silting up and hence periodic flooding. Spalding Priory established a grange in this vicinity soon after AD1294 – Goll Grange or *Grange of Golewilw* (HER 22093). Its location is probably to the east of the Wheat Mere Drain and is marked by two large mounds, which probably represent the main buildings of the grange. Finds of medieval pottery, building material, stone, brick and tile have been found at this location.

3.12 The Grade I listed parish church of St Mary on Barrier Bank was constructed around AD1380 as a chapel in the parish of Spalding (HER 22168). The church comprises a west tower, nave, chancel and a south porch. The nave was extended between 1480-6. The chancel and west tower were added in 1487. The church was restored in 1882.

3.13 Fragments of medieval dylings survive in a small disused field close to the railway crossing in Cowbit (HER 20323).

3.14 The River Welland was repositioned in the mid 17th century. This formed the Cowbit Wash, an area of washland in the western part of the parish. This was created to contain the overflow of the River Welland during periods of flooding. Cowbit Wash is up to 1km wide and lies between the eastern and former medieval course of the Welland and its present course. The Cowbit Wash remained unploughed until the 1950s, but is now under arable cultivation. Initially these lands provided both summer grazing and a hay crop but in winter was still liable to flooding. During the past 30 years this area of the Lincolnshire fens has been the subject of intensive arable farming, which has in turn desiccated the peat and has led to a general lowering of ground levels.

3.15 The remains of possible extraction pits of possible post-medieval date for the construction of the nearby river flood defensive bank are situated to the west of Cowbit (HER 20326).

3.16 A Grade II listed windmill is situated on Backgate and is a tower mill that was constructed in 1798 (HER 20328). The tower was raised by the addition of a further floor by 1815. The windmill worked until the mid 1930s and then continued by engine and finally by electric motor until 1969, when it closed down.

3.17 A United Free Methodist Chapel is featured on the O.S. map of 1904 (HER 25653). The first chapel belonging to the Wesleyan Methodists was built in 1842. By 1861, there was either a new building or a conveyance to the Free Methodists. In 1912, a new chapel was built alongside. This closed in 1983 and is now a private dwelling.

3.18 The railway station at Cowbit was constructed in 1867 by the Great Northern Railway to a standard design (HER 23554). The station was closed to passengers in 1961 and to freight traffic in 1964. The line was closed in 1982 and the rails raised. A new house was built over the track bed. The site consists of platforms, station house and offices. The railway station was the subject of historic building recording in 2006 (Site code: CSB05).

3.19 There have been a number of previous archaeological investigations within the vicinity of this development site. In 2011, an archaeological watching brief took place on the groundworks for a new residential dwelling at 18, Stone Gate (HER ELI1039, Site code: Cost 11). This identified an undated pit and two undated ditches, one of which followed the line of a former field boundary dating from between 1886 and 1938. Sherds of medieval and post-medieval pottery were recovered from the topsoil.

3.20 In 2011, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken on land at Backgate (HER ELI11956, Site code: COBG 11). Archaeological remains of Iron Age, Roman, medieval

and post-medieval date were found The Roman deposits were thought to relate to domestic or agricultural occupation associated with a nearby settlement. Finds of pottery, animal bone and a triangular loomweight were amongst the finds of Iron Age-Roman date along with Roman wall plaster fragments. The Roman pottery came from archaeological features close to the Backgate frontage. The wall plaster indicated the nearby presence of a high status building. Within the south-western area of the site, Roman deposits found here were likely to have been associated with a small contemporary settlement in the adjacent field to the south, which had first been identified by fieldwalking in 2001. Medieval and post-medieval deposits included features which formed part of a wider system of land division comprising closely spaced west-east aligned ditches.

3.21 In 2002, an archaeological watching brief took place on land at St Mary's Primary School (HER 23817, ELI3796, Site code: CSM02). This was carried out on the groundworks for a new classroom extension and located a series of dumped deposits that related to previous construction and development on the site. No archaeological deposits or features were found. The finds comprised post-medieval pottery and glass including a sherd of 16th century pottery..

3.22 In 2005, an archaeological watching brief was undertaken on the excavation of drainage trenches for a new residential dwelling at Stone Gate (HER ELI6523, Site code: CSG04). This monitored the excavation of drainage trenches for a new residential dwelling. This located on natural and recent topsoil deposits with no archaeological activity or finds identified.

3.23 In 2001, a geophysical survey was undertaken on land off Curlew Drive (HER ELI1717). This identified a few archaeological anomalies, two of which extended the line of previous anomalies that had been noted in a previous nearby earlier survey. Two other large and discrete anomalies were interpreted as being of various agricultural features and areas of modern disturbance were also found.

3.24 This prior geophysical survey which took place on a block of land off Backgate in 2001 also included a fieldwalking survey on this site (HER 23686-7, ELI1935-1937; Site code: BGC01). The geophysical surveys identified a number of anomalies which may probably respect buried field ditches and pits possibly of Roman date. The accompanying fieldwalking survey identified a concentration of Roman pottery from the mid 2nd-4th centuries AD that indicated the presence of a small Roman settlement site probably for habitation rather than for industrial use. A slight concentration of medieval finds were also located at the western limits of the survey area. Other finds from this survey comprised a scatter of 11th-15th century pottery and a scatter of post-medieval-modern pottery.

3.25 A geophysical survey and an evaluation took place in 2001-2 on land at Curlew Drive (HER 23686-7, ELI3104, Site Code: CCB02) in advance of a residential development. The identified geophysical anomalies that turned out to be post-medieval drainage ditches. A less well defined area of magnetic enhancement was found to coincide with an area of deeper flood silts. The evaluation identified several ditches and pits across the site with finds of Roman pottery, animal bone, a loomweight and possible wall plaster. Some of the pottery and the wall plaster suggested the location of a nearby settlement of high status. Large quantities of post-medieval pottery and brick wasters were also recovered from this site suggesting the site of a possible nearby brick clamp were also located.

3.26 A map regression exercise was undertaken using published Ordnance Survey (O.S.) maps from the Lincolnshire Archives and the local studies collections of Lincoln Central Library. An extract from the First Edition 25 inch to one mile scale O.S. map of 1888 shows the development site as being situated within a small enclosure off the southern frontage of Stone Gate. A drain is featured marking the eastern and southern boundaries

of the site, which have become established by this time along with the northern boundary along the southern frontage of Stone Gate. A house is also featured at this street frontage within its own small enclosure. A small pond is also shown at the southern end of the site.

3.27 An extract from the Second Edition 25 inch to one mile scale O.S. map of 1904 shows the house plot having gone by this time. A pair of new terraced houses are shown to the north-west and also at the southern frontage of Stone Gate. The small pond has also gone from the site by 1904.

3.28 An extract from the Provisional Edition six inch to one mile scale O.S. map of 1950 shows that no change took place to the layout of this development site between 1904 and 1950.

3.29 An extract from the 1:10,560 scale O.S map of 1956 similarly shows that no change took place to the layout of this development site between 1950 and 1956.

3.30 An extract from the 1:2,500 scale O.S. map of 1976 shows the current layout of the development site.

4. Aims and objectives of the project

4.1 The aims of the project are the continual archaeological monitoring of all site groundworks during the construction stage of development, which will comprise the mechanical excavation of foundations and services for the new residential development.

4.2 The objectives of the project are:

To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the area of the development site.

To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.

To allow the preservation by record of archaeological deposits.

4.3 The development site is situated within an archaeologically sensitive area and within an area of high archaeological potential. The development is situated to the east of the medieval parish church and within the historic core of the medieval and post-medieval settlements of Cowbit. It is considered highly likely that archaeological features, deposits, structures and finds associated with these medieval and post-medieval settlements may be encountered on this site. The specific objectives of this archaeological will therefore be to record any archaeological features, deposits, structures or finds associated with this medieval and post-medieval settlement activity.

5. Methodology

5.1 The archaeological monitoring will be undertaken during the groundworks phase of development, and will include the **continual monitoring** of any topsoil stripping, of the excavations of foundations and service trenches, and of any other ground disturbances. The mechanical excavations will be undertaken using a toothless bucket.

5.2 All work will be carried out according to the Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists (CHIfA) standards.

5.3 All work will be undertaken following all statutory Health and Safety requirements and legislation in operation at the time of the monitoring.

5.4 A Risk Assessment will be prepared for the site.

5.5 Stripped areas and trench sections will be continually observed to identify any archaeological features and/or deposits which may be exposed.

5.6 Section drawings at a scale of 1:10 will be made of any archaeological features identified in the course of the groundworks, including representative sections of trenches at appropriate intervals. These will be related to a site plan drawing at a scale of 1:50, which may also record archaeological features and/or deposits identified. Any significant archaeological features in plan will also be recorded at a scale of 1:20.

5.7 Written descriptions detailing the nature of archaeological features and/or deposits encountered will be compiled on pro-forma context record sheets.

5.8 Any finds recovered will be bagged and labelled for further analysis. All relevant finds will be ordered into an archive. Most modern material will not be retained, although notes will be made of the appropriate context. An appropriate sample of materials such as ceramic building materials will be made.

5.9 Any and all artefacts found during the monitoring and thought to come under the provisions of the *Treasure Act* (1996), will be removed from the site to a secure location, and will be promptly reported to the appropriate coroner's office.

5.10 Throughout the monitoring a digital photographic record will be compiled, and will comprise an overview of the site prior to work starting, and during as well as after completion of the work, and will include any excavated features, sections and other relevant details that aid interpretation.

5.11 Should human remains be encountered, they will be left *in situ*, and only excavated if absolutely necessary. Proper respect will be accorded to these remains, which will be cleaned to allow positive identification. Should removal be required, the appropriate Ministry of Justice Licence will be obtained prior to the removal of the remains. In addition, any remains will be reported to the local Environmental Health Department, coroner and the police will be informed, where appropriate.

5.12 The fieldwork will be undertaken by Neville Hall. Additional personnel may be appointed if required.

6. Post-fieldwork methodology

6.1 On the completion of the fieldwork, all of the written, drawn and photographic records produced by the archaeological monitoring will be checked, ordered, labelled (where appropriate) and catalogued to compile a distinctive site archive.

6.2 All finds recovered during the fieldwork will be washed, marked and packaged according to the deposit from which there were recovered. They will also be ordered into (and form part of) the site archive.

6.3 An assessment of significant finds will be made in light of general site information.

6.4 Any finds requiring specialist treatment and/or conservation will be sent to the Conservation Laboratory at The Collection, Lincoln, and in consultation with the relevant curator.

6.5 The site archive will be examined to enable the determination of various phases of activity on the site (if appropriate).

6.6 Relevant finds will be sent to specialists for identification and dating.

7. Monitoring arrangements

7.1 Provision will be made for the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Team on behalf of South Holland District Council, (the Local Planning Authority) to monitor the works during the fieldwork stage and any other aspect of the archaeological project as required including the post fieldwork analysis and report preparation stages of the project.

7.2 A minimum notification period of not less than fourteen days of the start date of works on the site will be given to the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Team.

7.3 All aspects of the archaeological programme will be undertaken in accordance with this project specification.

7.4 Any variation to the project programme in terms of works or recording on or off site will be fully discussed and agreed with the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Team.

7.5 Arrangements will be made for the representative of the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Team for access to the site to undertake monitoring visits, and such visits will be accounted for in the final report preparation.

7.6 The Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Team shall be kept fully informed of any unexpected or unforeseen discoveries made during the course of the archaeological monitoring and recording programme.

8. Archive preparation and deposition

8.1 The documentation and records generated by the archaeological monitoring will be sorted and ordered in the format acceptable to The Collection, Lincoln, and to the standards and requirements as laid out in their Guide Book.

8.2 A unique accession number will be obtained from The Collection for the site archive.

8.3 The archive will be deposited at The Collection, Lincoln by February 2018.

9. Reporting procedures

9.1 A report detailing the findings of the archaeological monitoring will be completed within two months after the finalisation of the fieldwork. Any delays will be related to the relevant authorities.

9.2 The report will consist of:

A title page, with project name and location, national grid reference, planning reference, site code, accession number, client name, author and date;

A contents page listing report sections, illustrations and appendices;

A non-technical summary of the results of the monitoring;

An introduction, site description and location;

Planning background to the project;

A section on the archaeological and historical background to the project;

A description of the methodology used in the project;

A section describing the results of the monitoring;

A section on the discussion and results of the project including a consideration of the findings of the project in a local and regional context;

A consideration of the effectiveness of the project methodology and a confidence rating of the results;

Illustrations including plans showing monitored areas, all archaeological features and sections thereof (including trench sections); and

Appendices comprising appropriate photographs of the site and of specific and significant archaeological features and representative sections, a list of contexts, any specialist reports on finds from the site, a list of the site archive, a photographic register and a copy of this document.

An electronic copy of the report will be deposited with the OASIS project (On-line Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations) http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/index.cfm.

10. Publication and dissemination

10.1 Copies of the final report will be deposited with the clients, the local curator (on behalf of the local planning authority), South Holland District Council and with the Lincolnshire Heritage Environment Record (including a digital copy in a .pdf format).

10.2 A note will be placed in 'Lincolnshire History and Archaeology' describing the results.

10.3 The deposition of the site archive will be in accordance with guidelines outlined in the Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook (LCC, 2017).

10.4 Should the results of the archaeological investigation merit it, a note will also be placed in appropriate national journals e.g. *Medieval Archaeology.*

11. Other factors (including contingency)

11.1 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 Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Team.

11.2 Where important archaeological remains are discovered and deemed to merit further investigation, additional financial resources may be required to provide an appropriate level of investigation, recording and analysis.

11.3 Any additional financial 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 Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Team and the client.

12. Variations to the proposed scheme

12.1 Variations to the proposed scheme will only be made following written confirmation with the archaeological curator.

13. Resources

13.1 The monitoring will be undertaken by Neville Hall using standard archaeological field techniques.

13.2 Post-excavation analysis will be undertaken by Neville Hall and where available specialist analysis from:-

Jane Young	Medieval and Post-medieval Ceramics
Ian Rowlandson	Iron Age and Roman Ceramics
Val Fryer	Environmental
Carol Allen	Neolithic and Bronze Age
Malin Holst	Osteoarchaeology
Jane Cowgill	Metallurgy

13.3 Small finds requiring conservation will be conserved by the City and County Museum Laboratory.

13.4 Recognised specialists will be sought in the event that other data are retrieved in the course of the monitoring.

14. Insurance statement

14.1 Public indemnity of £2,000,000 and private indemnity insurance of £250,000 with Towergate Insurance.

15. Copyright

15.1 Copyright will remain that of the author. Licence will be given to the client to present any reports, copyright of the author, to the planning authority in good faith of satisfactory settlement of account.

16. Ownership

16.1 It will be asked of the client, at the outset, that the ownership of any portable objects discovered in the course of the monitoring be donated along with the archive.