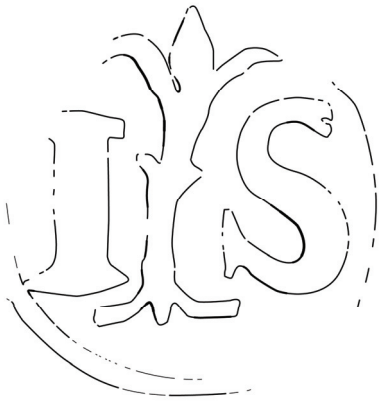
ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION, INVESTIGATION AND RECORDING ('WATCHING BRIEF') AT WITTON HOUSE, BISHOP WILTON, EAST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE



Insignia on the heel base of a clay tobacco pipe, *c*.1670-1700:
the initials 'I' and 'S', set either side of a tobacco plant.
Scale 5/1

By Chris Fern BA MA

Sept – Nov 2009

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Site:	Witton House, 87 Main Street, Bishop Wilton, Y042 1SP
Site Code:	BISH'09
County:	East Riding of Yorkshire
NGR:	SE 7994 5527
Planning Application No:	DC/09/01303/PLF
SMR No:	SMR/PA/CONS/15621
***Development*:**	Erection of a two-storey extension to the existing dwelling, following demolition of existing garage.
***Date of Issue*:**	29th December 2009
Prepared by:	Chris Fern Fern Archaeology Aumit House Aumit Lane Ampleforth North Yorkshire YO62 4EX Tel: 01439 766080 **Email:** cjrf100@aol.com
On behalf of:	Mr and Mrs Richard Minion Witton House 87 Main Street Bishop Wilton YO42 4QQ

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1 SUMMARY

1.1 An archaeological 'watching brief' was carried out on 29th September 2009 by *Fern Archaeology* during ground works associated with a development at 87 Main Street, Bishop Wilton, East Riding of Yorkshire.

1.2 Two archaeological features were identified, both possibly pits. Neither contained any dating evidence, though at least one pre-dated the formation of the topsoil. A small amount of unstratified material was found, including one sherd of medieval pottery and a piece of clay tobacco pipe of 17th-century date.

Figure 1: Location map of Bishop Wilton (1/25000)

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2 SITE, LOCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

2.1 A scheme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording (i.e. 'watching brief') was operated during ground works for a house extension at 87 Main Street, Bishop Wilton, East Riding of Yorkshire, Appl. no. DC/09/01303/PLF. This is at National Grid Reference (NGR) SE 7994 5527 (**Figure 1**).

2.2 The archaeological monitoring was in response to a standard archaeological planning condition placed on the development by East Riding County Council, on the advice of *Humber Archaeology Partnership* (HAP) (Evans 2009).

The condition states: 'No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details (cf. PPG16, para.30; Circular 11/95, Model Clause 55).

2.3 It was the opinion of HAP that 'it is likely…that any ground-works in the area will encounter archaeological deposits of Iron Age, Romano-British, medieval and later periods'.

2.4 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the site was produced in advance of works by *Fern Archaeology* (Fern 2009), submitted on 13th August 2009 and approved by HAP on 16th September 2009. The site works and this report have been undertaken in accordance with the WSI document.

2.5 The site code allocated for the project is BISH'09.

2.6 The site is located on the northern side of a beck that runs through the village, at approximately 72-73m AOD (*Above Ordnance Datum*). The drift geology in this area comprises chalk gravel in a very dark grey sandy-clay matrix (C1002), overlying red boulder clay (C1003).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 The site lies within the likely bounds of the medieval planned village. Though probably reorganised in the early Norman period, a settlement existed prior to the Domesday survey of AD 1086, with a church of Anglo-Saxon origin. The manor was granted by King Aethelstan to the archiepiscopal see of York in the 10th century. In the mid-15th century Archbishop Neville built a palace in the village, to which the settlement owes its name (Bulmer 1892).

3.2 Earthworks, including house platforms and ditch boundaries, to the west of the modern settlement are the probable remnants of the late medieval palace. Whilst, within the village itself, recent works have recorded further evidence of this period, including Humberware pottery of 14th- to 16th-century date (Evans 2009).

3.3 Archaeological monitoring in 2002 at 3 Main Street also recorded a possible medieval boundary ditch, as well as an 18th-century brick-lined well (Ibid.).

3.4 Earlier vestiges have also been recorded in the vicinity by previous archaeological monitoring. These include a burial of prehistoric or Romano-British date, a possible Iron Age round house, as well as worked flints and pottery covering the same periods (Ibid.).

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 The supervising archaeologist was Chris Fern.

4.2 The guidelines for archaeological excavation, issued by *The Institute of Field Archaeologists*, were adhered to throughout.

4.3 An archaeologist was present to monitor all ground-works (that penetrated below the topsoil/modern overburden) associated with the development. After the demolition and removal of an existing garage structure and associated driveway, this comprised ground levelling and the excavation of wall-foundation trenches, that was completed in one day. The drainage and sewerage for the new structure is to make use of existing services, and no additional excavation for these will be required below the observed depth of made ground/topsoil.

4.4 A back-acting mechanical excavator was used, fitted with a toothless bucket.

4.5 The site stratigraphy and the archaeological features observed were recorded as follows and in accordance with the WSI (Fern 2009):

1) with a single context recording system (starting at C1000), using the *Munsell* system (**Appendix 1**);
2) with 10 megapixel digital and 35mm photography;
3) by drawing, plans and sections on *permatrace* paper at 1/20 scale;
4) and by collecting all finds that pre-date AD1900 (**Appendix 2**).

5 FIELDWORK RESULTS

5.1 Immediately beneath the removed garage floor was a layer of hardcore (C1001), 0.25m deep, which beyond the footprint of the demolished structure abutted a turfed topsoil (C1000), up to 0.40m deep. The foundation trenches for the new building, with a rectangular footprint 3.81m x 6.29m, were excavated using a 360° mechanical digger under constant archaeological supervision (**Figure 2: Plate 1**). The trenches were excavated to a depth of 0.90m from the existing surface, to approximately 72.15m AOD. The area within the building footprint, to form the foundation for the interior ground-floor, was also reduced by approximately 0.25m.

Plate 1: View of the wall-foundation trenches looking south-east.

5.2 Two archaeological features were identified and recorded in the trench sections (**Figures 2 and 3; Plates 2 and 3**):

C1004 – a probable small pit or post-hole, backfilled with dark greyish-brown silty clay and chalk gravel/pebbles, and flecked with charcoal (**Figure 3; Plate 2**). It was approximately 0.70m wide and 0.50m deep. No finds were recorded. It cut both the natural soils (C1002-3) and was sealed by the modern hardcore layer. It is, therefore, not closely datable.

C1005 – a probable small pit or post-hole, backfilled with dark greyish brown silty clay and chalk gravel/pebbles, and flecked with charcoal (**Figure 3; Plate 3**). It was approximately 1.00m wide and 0.70m deep. No finds were recorded. It cut the natural clay (C1003), though its relationship with layer (C1002) was poorly defined, but as this too is geological, it must logically post-date it. It was sealed by the topsoil (C1000), a likely garden soil of ?18th-20th century date.

Plate 2: Pit C1004, looking north-east (2 x 1m survey pole)

6 FINDS

6.1 Four finds were recovered from the hardcore layer C1002, and hence are residual. They comprise one sherd of medieval pot, two sherds of post-medieval pottery and one piece of clay tobacco pipe, comprising of both the bowl and stem.

6.2 All finds have been cleaned, marked and packaged, in accordance with the *First Aid for Finds* manual (Watkinson and Neal 2001). They are detailed in **Appendix 2**. All are archive stable and do not require specialist conservation or storage.

6.3 The finds have been assessed by Jane Young and Jen Mann (**Appendix 2**). The clay tobacco pipe, in particular, is notable for its early date, *c.*1670-1700. It is stamped on the base of its heel with the insignia 'I' 'S', set either side of a stylized tobacco plant (**Frontispiece**). It was probably made in York (Mann in **Appendix 2**).

Plate 3: Pit C1005, looking north-east (1 x 1m survey pole)

7 INTERPRETATION

7.1 The following phased interpretation of the site is suggested:

Phase N: (Natural) drift geology – C1002, C1003

Phase M: (Victorian to Modern Periods), 19th - 20th century – C1000 (topsoil), C1001 (hardcore)

Phase U: (Undated, *perhaps* post-medieval pits/post-holes) 16th – 18th century – C1004, C1005

7.2 The two undated pits encountered, and specifically their backfills, suggest to their excavator that they are *most probably* post-medieval, and may relate to a fence or garden features on the site. More generally, the few finds recorded span the 12th – 18th centuries, which accords, unsurprisingly, with the known periods of activity within the village.

8 ARCHIVE

8.1 The client has agreed to deposit the archive with East Riding of Yorkshire Museum Service (ERYMS), who have agreed to accept it, with the exception of the unstratified finds. The client has asked to retain the medieval pottery (1 sherd), whilst the rest of the collection will be maintained by *Fern Archaeology*, who shall gladly grant access for research to any *bona fide* parties. **Appendix 3** gives an index of the articles deposited with ERYMS.

9 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Fern Archaeology would like to thank Mr and Mrs R Minion for funding the archaeological monitoring. Thanks are also extended to Humber Archaeological Partnership for their consultation and support.

APPENDIX 1: archaeological context descriptions

Context	**Type**	**Interpretation**	**Profile**	**Plan**	**Munsell Colour**	**Stratigraphic Relationship**	**Soil/Stone Type**	**Inclusions**	**Dimensions (cm)** Length – Width – Depth	**Date (*period*)**	**Phase**
1000	layer	topsoil	layer	unseen	10YR 3.1	over: C1002	loam	chalk gravel /pebbles, modern CBM	** - ** - 40	VICTORIAN - MODERN	M
1001	layer	hardcore	layer	unseen	-	over: C1002, C1004	limestone fragments	medieval/post-medieval/ modern pottery, modern CBM	** - ** - 25	MODERN	M
1002	layer	drift geology	layer	unseen	5Y 3.1	under: C1000; over: C1003; cut by: C1004, C1005?	chalk gravel in a sandy-clay matrix	-	** - ** - 70	NATURAL	N
1003	layer	drift geology	layer	unseen	2.5YR 4.6	under: C1002; cut by: C1004, C1005	clay	-	** - ** - **	NATURAL	N
1004	feature	pit/post-hole?	V-shaped	long ovoid	10YR 4.2	under: C1001; cuts: C1002, C1003	silty clay	chalk gravel, flint, charcoal flecks	115 - 70 - 50	UNDATED (POST-MEDIEVAL?)	U
1005	feature	pit/post-hole?	V-shaped	unseen	10YR 4.2	under: C1000; cuts: C1002?, C1003	silty clay	chalk gravel, flint, charcoal flecks	** -100 - 70	UNDATED (POST-MEDIEVAL?)	U

APPENDIX 2: finds archive for Bishop Wilton
by Jane Young and Jen Mann

Context	Find No.	Material	Cname	quantity	part	Fabric	Sub-fabric	form	decoration	Notes	Date
Unstrat.	1	ceramic	Ryedale	1 sherd	base	Ryedale ware	-	small jug/jar	-	int. & ext. glaze	late 16th - early 18th century
Unstrat.	1	ceramic	NGR	1 sherd	base	Northern Gritty ware	Group A/B/C; light reduced	jar/bowl	-	sooting int. & ext.	mid 12th - 15th century
Unstrat.	2	ceramic	BS	1 sherd	neck	Brown stoneware	-	small jar	incised	Staffordshire product?	18th century
Unstrat.	3	ceramic	CTP	1 frag.	bowl/stem	Clay Tobacco Pipe	-	pipe	'Heel' is stamped on the base with the initials 'I' and 'S'; each letter is set either side of a ?tobacco plant (**Frontispiece**).	probably a York product	c. 1670-1700

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APPENDIX 3: archive index

The following articles have been deposited with East Riding of Yorkshire Museums Service (ERYMS).

Class	**Index No.**	**Description**
Archive CD	1.1	Archive CD comprising: WSI pdf (1 file); Report pdf (1 file); ceramic archive (1 file); archive index (1 file); HAP advice letter; digital photos of site and archaeology (25 files); drawings (3 files).
WSI	1.2	A4 paper hardcopy of WSI.
Report	1.3	A4 paper hardcopy of Report: *Archaeological Observation, Investigation and Recording ('Watching Brief) at Witton House, Bishop Wilton, East Riding of Yorkshire.*
Original Correspondence	1.4	A4 paper hardcopy of advice letter to Mr Williams (planning case officer, ERYC) from Mr Evans (Director, Humber Archaeology Partnership), 29 June 2009.
Original Site Record	1.5	A3 *Permatrace* drawing of archaeological sections, 1:20 scale.
Original Architect Plan	1.6	A3 paper hardcopy plan drawing, by *Sancton Drawing* (architect), of foundation layout, 1:50 scale, annotated with location of archaeological features and section points.
Original Architect Plan	1.7	A4 paper hardcopy plan drawing, by *Sancton Drawing* (architect), of site, 1:250 scale.
Original Architect Plan	1.8	A3 paper hardcopy section drawing, by *Sancton Drawing* (architect), of foundation depth, 1:50 scale.
Original Site Record	1.9	A4 paper hardcopy level survey record sheet.
Original Site Record	1.10	A4 paper hardcopy photographic record sheet, for 35mm colour film camera. Superseded by photo index.
Photos	1.11	9 colour 35mm colour negatives and 9 prints, with index.
Specialist Report	1.12	A4 paper hardcopy: *Ceramic Archive for Bishop Wilton (BISH09)*, by Jane Young and Jen Mann

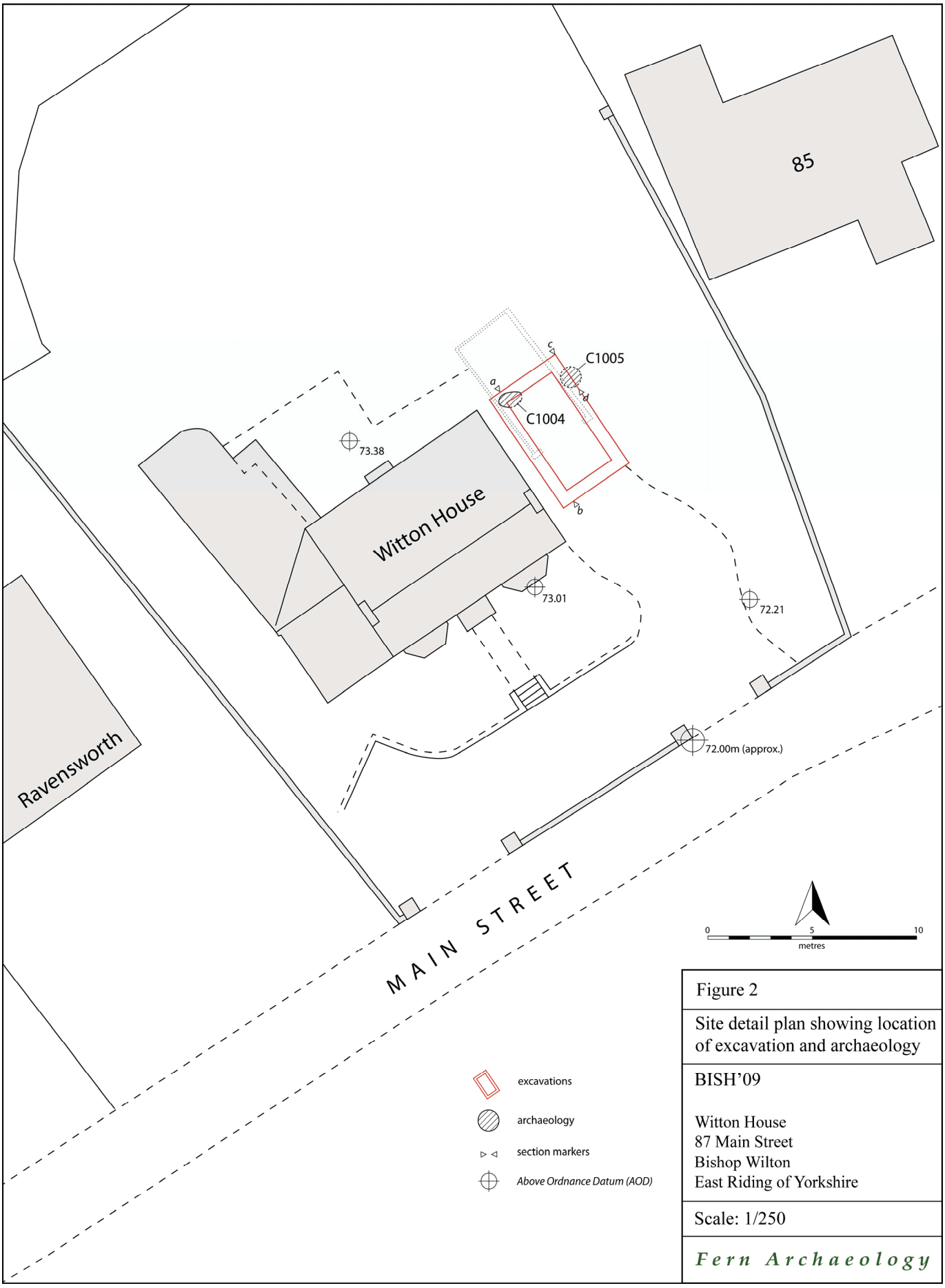


Figure 2

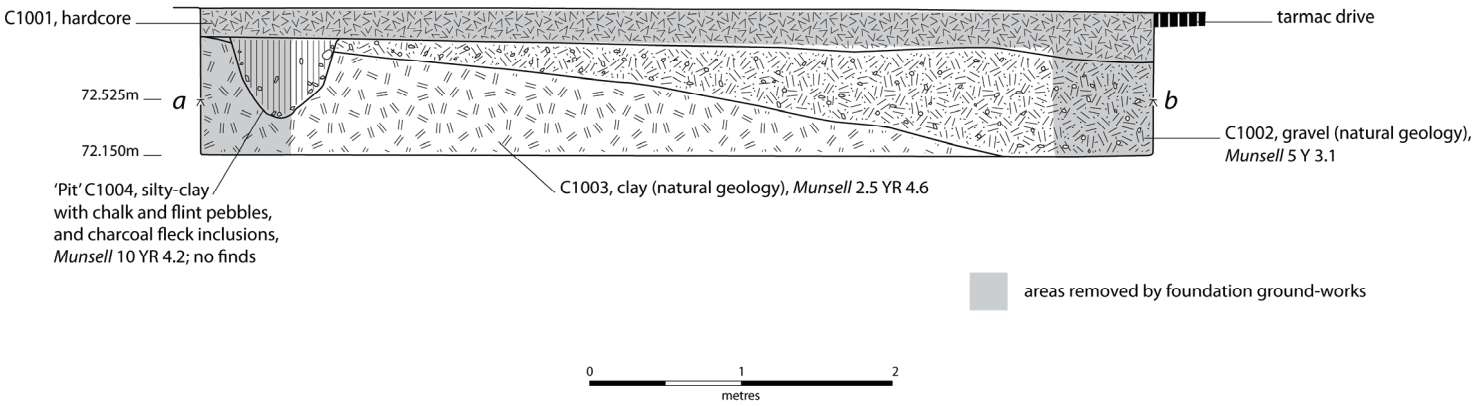
Site detail plan showing location of excavation and archaeology

BISH'09

Witton House
87 Main Street
Bishop Wilton
East Riding of Yorkshire

Scale: 1/250

Fern Archaeology



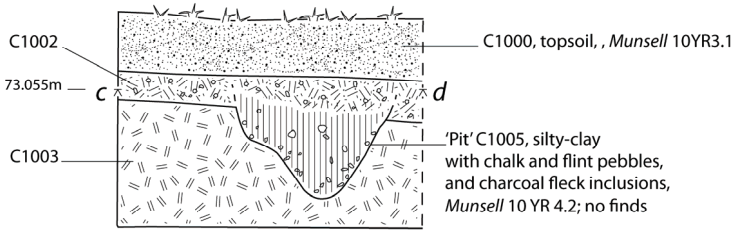


Figure 3

West-facing sections *a* - *b* and *c* - *d*

BISH'09

Witton House
87 Main Street
Bishop Wilton
East Riding of Yorkshire

Scale: 1/50

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