

# **Witham** Archaeology

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A Report to Mr Stephen Brown  
January 2007



**LAND ADJACENT TO 27 WILLINGTON ROAD, KIRTON,  
LINCOLNSHIRE**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

*R Trimble*

# LAND ADJACENT TO 27 WILLINGTON ROAD, KIRTON, LINCOLNSHIRE

Site Code: KIWR06  
LCCM Accession No.: 2006.196  
Planning Application No.: B06/0226/FULL  
NGR: TF 30416 38699

## *Archaeological Watching Brief*

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# **LAND ADJACENT TO 27 WILLINGTON ROAD, KIRTON, LINCOLNSHIRE**

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

### **SUMMARY**

*This report describes the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by Witham Archaeology during groundworks relating to the construction of a new detached house on land adjacent to No. 27, Willington Road, Kirton, Lincolnshire. The work, commissioned by Mr Stephen Brown, was carried out in response to a condition of planning permission issued by Boston Borough Council Planning Department.*

*Evidence from previous archaeological work in the vicinity of the site, includes Saxon and medieval remains, together with iron slag, found during an evaluation on land 300m to the south, and medieval and post-medieval pottery found 50m to the north. A set of earthworks identified as probable fishponds lie 150m to the north.*

*The watching brief resulted in the discovery of a linear feature (probably a ditch) of probable early medieval date, and a second feature (undated), also interpreted as a probable ditch.*

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This report describes the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by Witham Archaeology during groundworks relating to the construction of a new house on land adjacent to No. 27, Willington Road, Kirton, Lincolnshire. The work, commissioned by Mr S Brown in response to a condition of planning permission issued by Boston Borough Council Planning Department, was carried out on the 9<sup>th</sup> August 2006.

The information in this document is presented with the proviso that further data may yet emerge. Witham Archaeology cannot, therefore, be held responsible for any loss, delay or damage, material or otherwise, arising out of this report. The document has been prepared in accordance with the Code of Conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

### **2.0 SITE LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY & GEOLOGY (see Figs. 1 & 2)**

The village of Kirton, lies in the parish of Kirton and in the administrative district of Boston Borough. It is situated approximately 6km south-southwest of the town of Boston. The site comprised a c. 30 x 12m parcel of land, located in the western part Kirton between existing residential properties on the eastern side of Willington Road, at NGR TF 30416 38699.

Topographically, the site is level and lies on drift geology of the Terrington Beds: younger marine deposits (Romano-British to present day), salt marsh, tidal creek and river deposits - sandy silt, sand and clay (British Geological Survey, England & Wales, Boston, Sheet 128, Solid & Drift, 1:50 000).

### **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

A settlement at Kirton is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, where it is referred to as *Chirchtune*. The place-name is thought to derive from the Old English *cirice*, meaning a church, and the Old English *tun* indicating a village, with *cirice* being replaced by the Old Norse *kirkja* (Cameron 1998, 75). The name suggests the presence of an early church of some importance, and high status is also suggested by the naming of a Wapentake after the settlement (Sawyer 1998, 63). According to the

Domesday Book a church in Kirton hundred was in the possession of Count Alan, one of two major landholders in Kirton, the other being Guy of Craon. It would appear that the earliest fabric in the present church of St Peter and St Paul dates to around 1170 AD (Pevsner 1989, 420).

Kirton developed into a relatively large market town, but is much diminished from its former status.

Previous archaeological investigations in Kirton have revealed important archaeological remains, including Saxon and medieval deposits remains (together with iron slag) from an evaluation on land 300m to the south of the site, and medieval and post-medieval pottery found at a location 50m to the north. A set of earthworks identified as probable fishponds lie 150m to the north of the site.

#### **4.0 AIMS & OBJECTIVES**

The principal objectives of the project, as set out in a Witham Archaeology specification of 8 August 2006, were to:

- *allow the preservation by record of any surviving archaeological deposits and artefacts exposed by the development groundwork within the constraints imposed by the contractor's working methods, programme and development design.*
- *produce a project archive for deposition with the appropriate museum together with a client report.*
- *provide information for accession to the County Sites and Monuments Record.*

#### **5.0 METHODOLOGY**

Following the removal of turf from across the site a network of foundation trenches 0.60m wide and 1.0m – 1.15m was excavated by machine. A soakaway pit measuring 2.5 x 1.5m in plan and 1.0m deep was excavated at the same time.

One site visit was made, timed to coincide with the main phase of groundwork. During this visit, the west facing side of the soakaway pit was hand-cleaned and recorded. Further cleaning and recording was carried out in the main foundation trenches – at the eastern end of the northern foundation trench, and in the southern trench, where the entire north facing section was recorded. The west facing section, at the northern end of the internal foundation trench was also cleaned and photographed. The remaining trenches were subject to continuous monitoring, with occasional cleaning to identify features of possible archaeological interest.

A series of colour photographs details archaeological deposits and features as well as the progress of groundwork operations. Section drawings were produced at scale 1:20, while written context descriptions were made for each unit of stratigraphy.

#### **6.0 RESULTS (see Fig. 3)**

##### *Soakaway Pit*

'Natural' sand and silt (102) was encountered at a depth of *c.* 0.72m below existing ground level. It was overlain on the northern side of the pit, by a mixed deposit of silt and clay (103) interpreted as a possible continuation of deposit (110) as seen elsewhere on the site (see below), or possibly as the fill of an ill-defined cut. This was overlain by a 0.30m thick layer (101) interpreted as a probable ploughsoil and a depth of topsoil (100) 0.45m thick. The soakaway pit produced a single fragment of unstratified pottery (111), dated to the mid 15<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> century.

##### *House-plot*

The sequence of deposits on the northeast side of the house-plot comprised natural sand and silt (104) comparable to (102), at a depth of 0.60 – 0.70m below existing ground level. It was cut by a linear feature [106] orientated approximately SW-NE. The feature, interpreted as a probable ditch, was 0.65m

wide and at least 0.40 deep, with steeply sloping sides; its fill (105) of sandy silt produced two sherds of late 11<sup>th</sup> to early/mid 13<sup>th</sup> century pottery.

The above stratigraphy was sealed by probable ploughsoil identical to that located in the soakaway pit, here varying in thickness between 0.40m to the east and 0.25m to the west. The overlying topsoil at this point was 0.35m thick.

Recording at the southwest corner of the house-plot revealed clay with sand/silt laminations (109) at 0.70m below existing ground level. It was overlain by a silt and sand deposit (110) comparable to (103) in the soakaway trench. These deposits were post-dated by a cut feature [108] located in the north facing section of the trench. The feature, which was gradually sloping and concave on its eastern side, extended beyond the limit of excavation to the west. At least 0.48m deep and containing a mid greyish brown sandy clay fill (107). The cut is thought most likely to form part of a ditch orientated approximately N-S. It was overlain by probable ploughsoil c. 0.35m thick (as 101) and topsoil c. 0.15m thick.

A brick-lined well (113) was located at the southeast corner of the house-plot. Circular in plan, the visible extent of the well had a diameter of around 1m, narrowing to approximately 0.50m at its opening. The well was estimated to be at least 2.5m deep.

Two fragments of unstratified pottery (112) dated 13<sup>th</sup> to mid 16<sup>th</sup> century and 14<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> century were collected from the site.

## **7.0 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION**

The watching brief revealed naturally occurring clays and silts – (103), (104), (109), (110) and probably (102) - extending throughout the area. These deposits were cut on the northern side of the site, by a c. SE-NW aligned ditch, [106], containing two sherds of early medieval pottery. The interpretation of a feature, [108], only partially revealed at the southwest corner of the house-plot, was less conclusive. However, it seems likely that the feature represents part of another ditch.

A sandy silt (101) extending throughout the site may be interpreted as a relict plough-soil indicative of arable cultivation during the medieval and/or post-medieval period.

A well at the southwest corner of the house-plot is probably post-medieval or modern in date.

In general, the results of the watching brief do not indicate the presence of intensive archaeological activity on the site. However, the occurrence of at least one feature containing early medieval pottery, and the recovery of unstratified sherds dating to the later medieval and/or early post-medieval period, suggests a low level of activity relating to early settlement at Kirton.

## **8.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The author of this report would like to thank the developer of the property, Mr Stephen Brown, for his assistance in ensuring the successful completion of this project. Thanks are also due to Jane Young for the pottery report, and to staff at the Historic Environment Record office, Lincolnshire County Council for assistance in locating background information for the site.

## **9.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Cameron, K & Insley, J 1998 *A Dictionary of Lincolnshire Place-Names*. English Place-Name Society

Pevsner, N & Harris, J 1989 *The Buildings of England. Lincolnshire*. Penguin (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., Revised by N Antram)

Sawyer, P 1998 *Anglo-Saxon Lincolnshire. A History of Lincolnshire III*. History of Lincolnshire Committee for SLHA

## **10.0 PROJECT/ ARCHIVE DETAILS**

### **10.1 LHA NOTE DETAILS**

SITE CODE: KIWR06

PLANNING APPLICATION No.: B06/0226/FULL

FIELD OFFICER: R Trimble

NGR: TF 30416 38699

CIVIL PARISH: Kirton

SMR No.:

DATE OF INTERVENTION: 9 August 2006

TYPE OF INTERVENTION: Watching Brief

UNDERTAKEN FOR: Mr Stephen Brown

### **10.2 ARCHIVE DETAILS**

PRESENT LOCATION: Witham Archaeology, 65 Grantham Road, Sleaford, Lincolnshire, NG34 7NG

FINAL LOCATION: The City and County Museum, Friars Lane, Lincoln

MUSEUM ACCESSION No.: 2006.196

ACCESSION DATE: -

#### ***The Site Archive Comprises:***

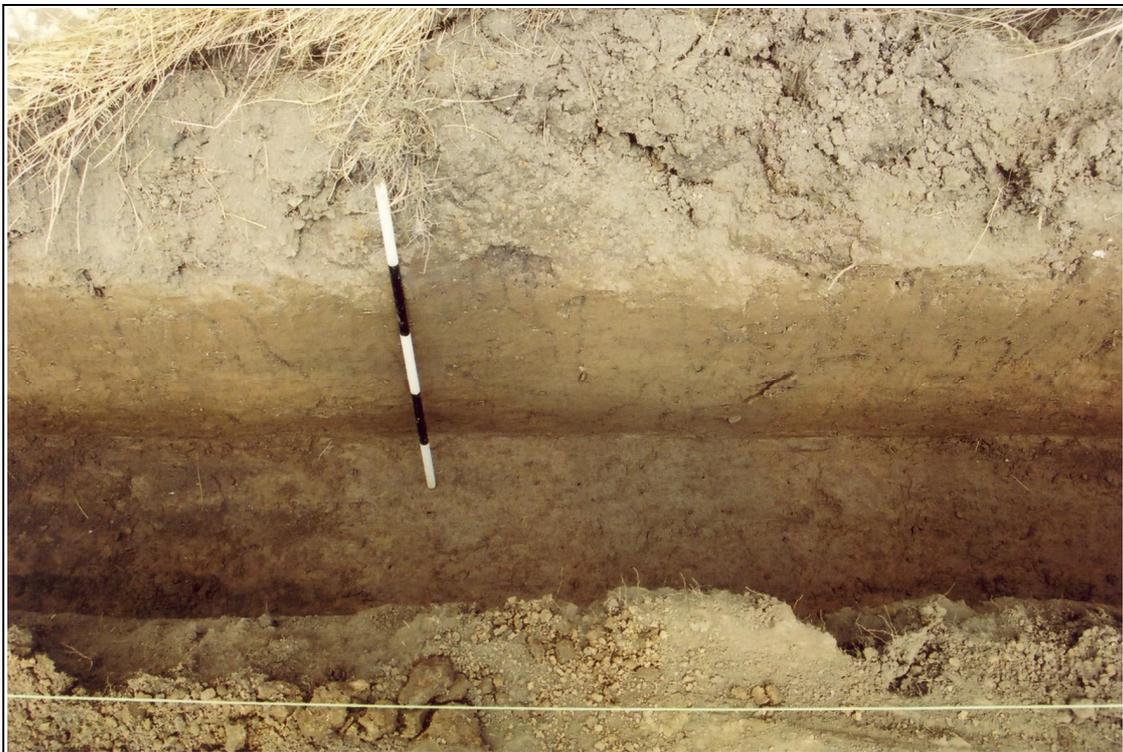
Context Records	13
Plans at Scale 1:100	1
Section Drawings at Scale 1:20	3
Colour Print Photographs	28
Set of Site Notes	1

*It is intended that transfer of the archive in accordance with current published requirements will be undertaken following completion of this project.*

## ***COLOUR PLATES***



*Plate 1 – Pit for soakaway (Section 1), looking northeast (1m scale).*



*Plate 2 – Probable ditch [106] and part of Section 2, looking northwest (1m scale).*

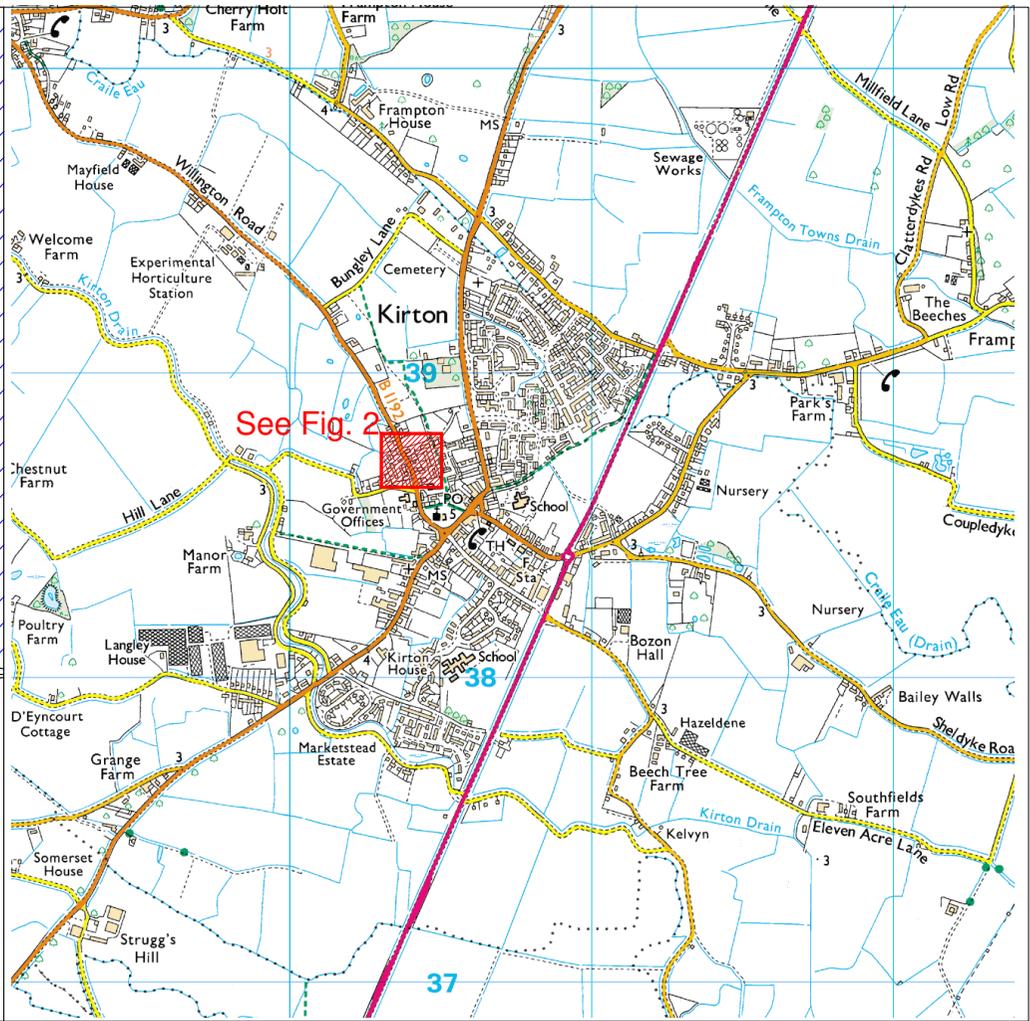
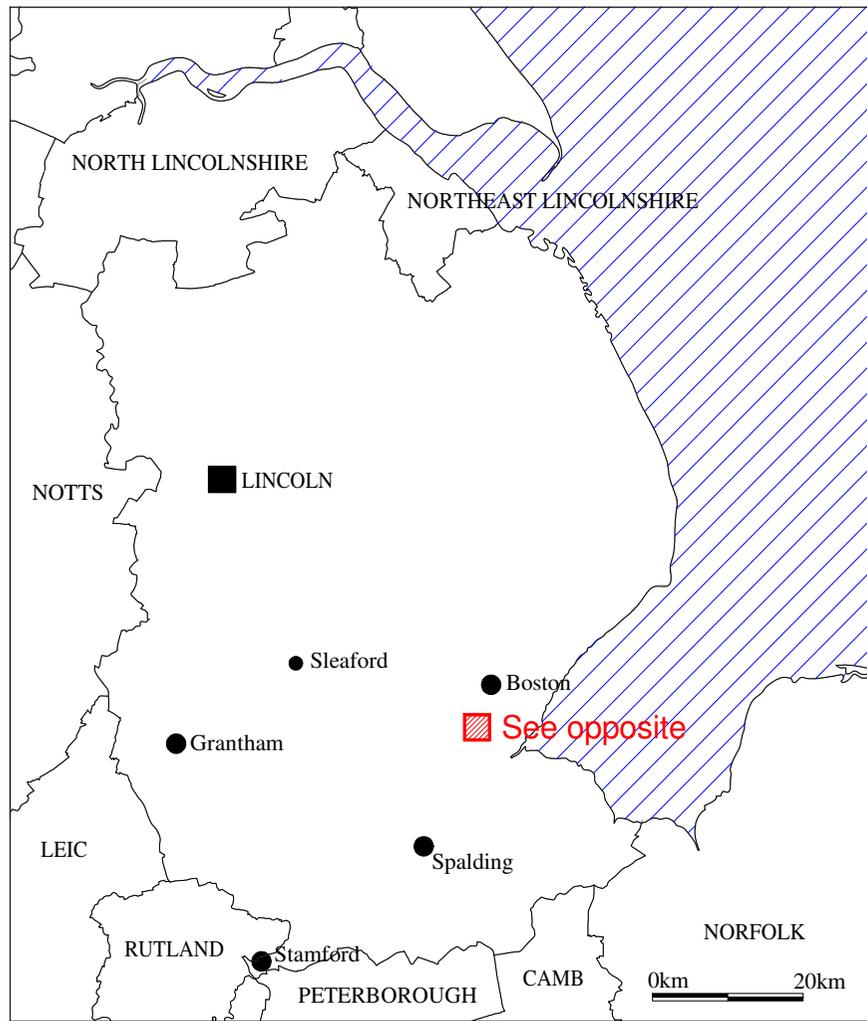
## ***COLOUR PLATES (CONT)***



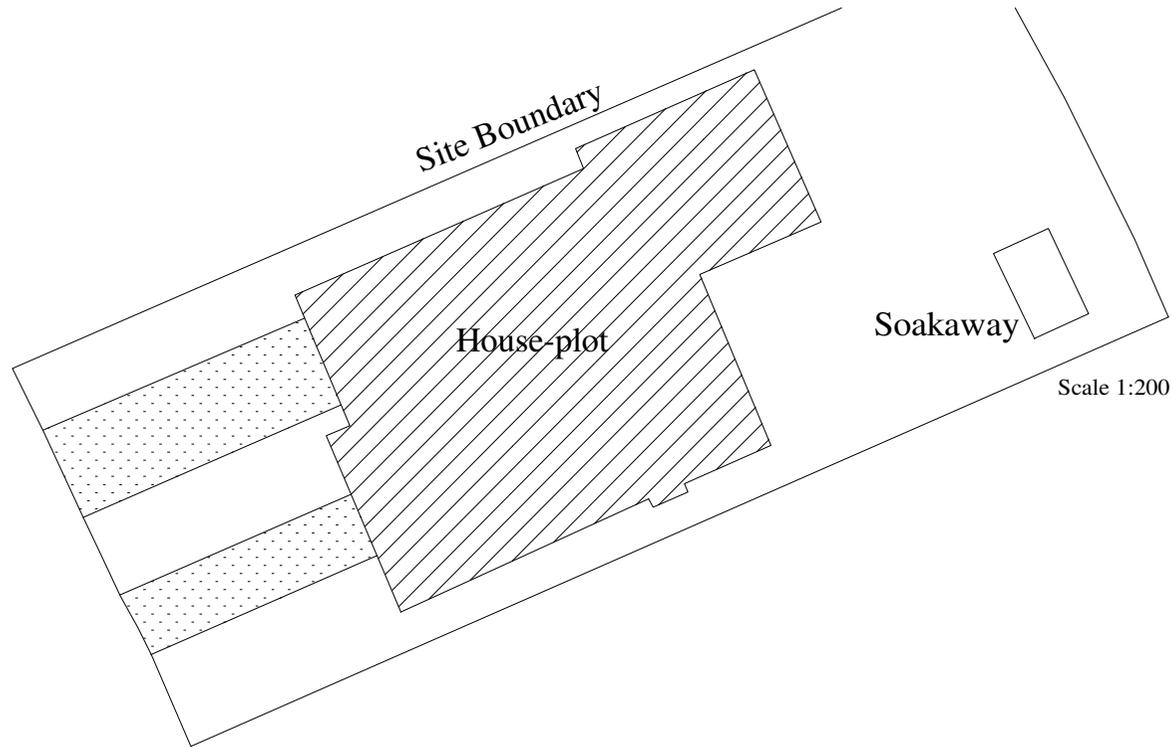
*Plate 3 – Trench on southern side of the plot; including Cut [108] and well (behind scale), looking east (1m scale).*



*Plate 4 – Cut [108], Section 3, looking approximately northeast (1m scale).*



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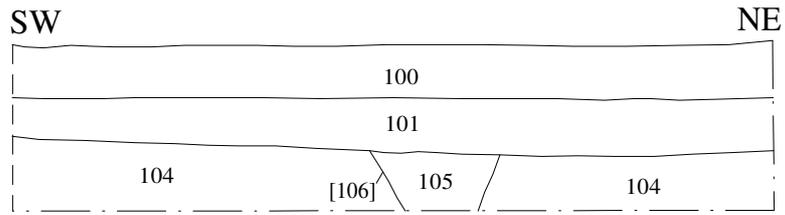
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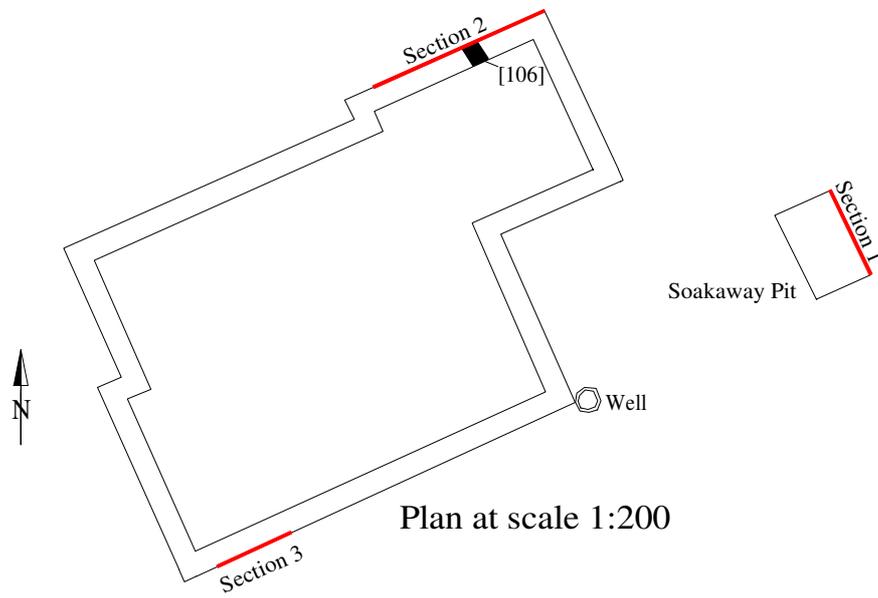
January 2007

Site Location Plans

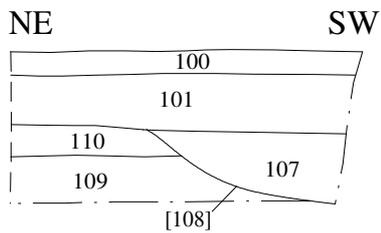
Fig. 2



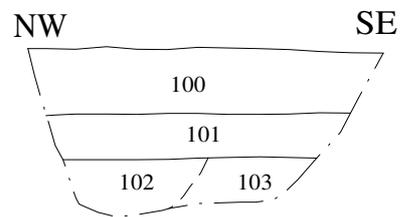
Section 2



Plan at scale 1:200



Section 3



Section 1



## APPENDIX A - CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

<i>Context</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Description</i>
100	Topsoil	Loose to moderately compact/friable, mid greyish brown silty sand; 0.35 to 0.45m thick
101	Layer = plough-soil?	Moderately compact/soft, light to mid brown sandy silt; 0.30 to 0.40m thick
102	Layer = natural clay?	Moderately compact/soft, mix of light brown sandy silt and soft mid brown silty clay; 0.38m thick
103	Layer	Moderately compact/soft, mixed light yellowish and light brown silty sand interspersed with bands of light grey sandy silt; 0.30m thick
104	Layer = natural clay?	As 102
105	Fill of [106]	Soft, mid greyish brown slightly sandy silt
106	Ditch or gully	Linear cut, with steeply sloping sides; at least 0.40m deep and 0.65m wide
107	Fill of 108	Compact, mid greyish brown sandy clay with sandy mottles
108	Cut (ditch?)	Partially revealed cut with gradually sloping eastern side (western side not revealed); at least 1.3m across E-W x 0.48m deep (recorded area only).
109	Layer – Natural	Moderately compact to compact, mid grayish brown clay with laminations of yellowish brown sand/silt; at least 0.30m thick.
110	Layer (=103?)	As 103 in composition; extends throughout trench; 0.20m thick at the western end of the trench
111	Unstratified finds	From the soakaway pit/trench
112	Unstratified Finds	General
113	Post-Medieval or modern well	Brick-lined well with opening of 0.50m diameter. At least 2.5m deep and widening to approximately 1m.

## APPENDIX B – POTTERY ARCHIVE

By Jane Young

<i>Context</i>	<i>Cname</i>	<i>Full Name</i>	<i>Sub Fabric</i>	<i>Form Type</i>	<i>Sherds</i>	<i>Vessels</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Part</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Date</i>
105	EMHM	Early Medieval Handmade ware	fabric T	jar/bowl	1	1	5	BS	soot	late 11th to early/mid 13th
105	EMHM	Early Medieval Handmade ware	fabric T	jar/bowl	1	1	6	BS	soot	late 11th to early/mid 13th
111	BOU	Bourne D ware	slightly sandy	jug/jar	1	1	19	BS		mid 15th to 16th
112	LANG	Langewehe stoneware		small drinking jug	1	1	5	BS		14th to 15th
112	TOY	Toynton Medieval Ware		bowl	1	1	40	BS	? ID or TOYII	late 13th to mid 16th

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