

98/19



MT R9s
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Lincolnshire County Council
Archaeology Section
unknown receipt date (not in post)
acceptance 19/10/18

Event 43534
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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

**Land Adjacent to 27 Morton Road, Laughton,
Nr Gainsborough, Lincolnshire.**

Site Code: MTR98
LCNCC Acc. No: 182.98
NGR: SK 8449 974~~8~~2
Planning Ref. 97/P/0545

Report prepared for Mr N Allison
by James Albone BSc, PIFA.
September 1998

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Summary

- * *An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the construction of a detached dwelling on land adjacent to 27 Morton Road, Laughton, nr Gainsborough, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).*
- * *The course of a possible boundary ditch cropmark, identified to the east of the site, did not cross the area of the foundation trenches.*
- * *Two parallel gullies, a ditch and a pit were identified, but unfortunately these contained no datable artefacts.*
- * *Fragments of iron working slag, dated to the post-medieval period, were recovered from the subsoil. A cluster of fragments possibly represented a smithing area.*

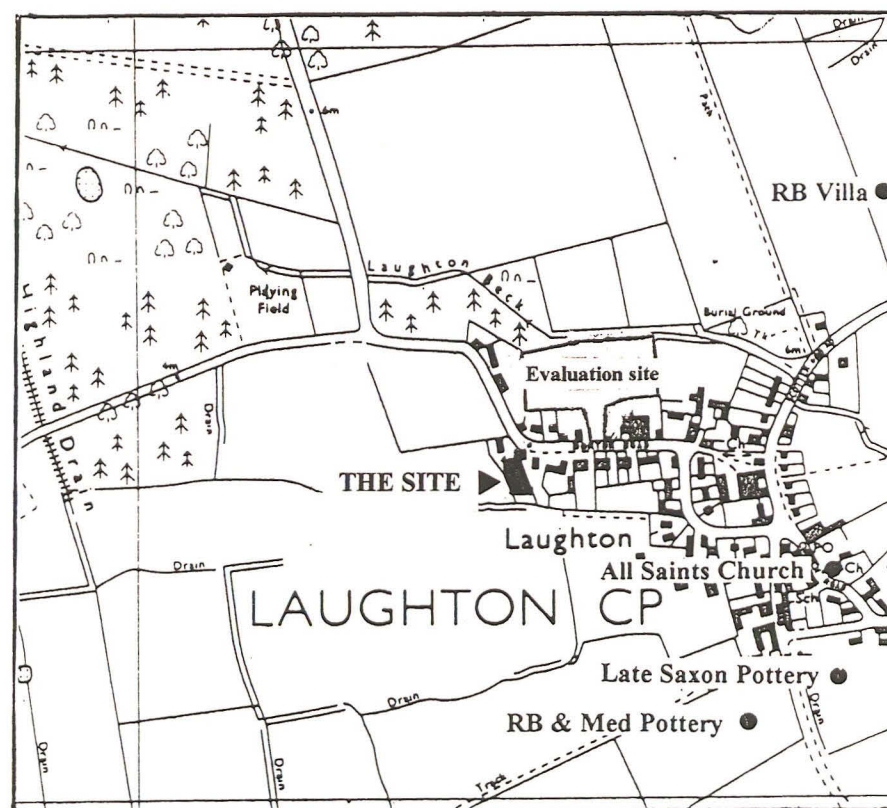


Fig. 1: Site location incorporating principal entries from the County Sites & Monuments Record (1:10,000)
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1.0 Introduction

A one day archaeological watching brief was carried out on a site to the south of 27 Morton Road, Laughton, near Gainsborough, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1) during the construction of a single detached dwelling. The work was commissioned by Mr N Allison in accordance with condition attached to the planning permission for the development (ref. 97/P/0545).

A copy of this report will be deposited at the County SMR, and a short text will be submitted to the editor of the county journal, *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology*, effectively placing the information in the public domain. Reports will be deposited at the City and County Museum, Lincoln, accompanied with an ordered project archive.

2.0 Location and Description

The village of Laughton is situated in the administrative district of West Lindsey, approximately 7 km. north-east of Gainsborough and 9 km west of Kirton in Lindsey. It lies on wind blown sands deposited around 11,000 - 10,000 years ago after the last glacial period. The site is centred on NGR SK8449 9746 and lies at c.4 m OD.

The site covers an area of approximately 1400m². It lies next to existing properties to the north and east, with agricultural land to its south and west.

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

The earliest archaeological evidence from Laughton are finds of prehistoric flint tools which have been made in a number of locations in the parish. An important Romano-British villa site lies to the north-east of the village. Pottery of this date has also been found on the south side of the village (see Fig. 1).

The meaning of the place-name Laughton is Old English in origin and refers to the enclosure or homestead where leeks grew (Ekwall 1989, 28). In the Domesday Survey of 1086 *Lactone* was divided between two owners; Roger of Poitou and Guy of Craon (Morgan and Thorn 1986). Laughton was situated in Corringham wapentake.

Parts of All Saints Church date from the 12th and 13th centuries with Decorated and Perpendicular style work on the tower. It was partially rebuilt in the late nineteenth century (Pevsner, Harris & Antram 1995, 427-8).

In 1340 Laughton was taxed at the same rate as Gainsborough (Stark 1843, 80). However, this is more of an indication that Gainsborough was a smaller settlement than that Laughton was a much larger one. The extent of the medieval settlement, which underwent some decline in the late 14th century, has to be determined from pottery scatters as no earthworks survive. Further depopulation consisting of eight farms and six cottages is recorded in 1607 along with the conversion of 300 acres of arable land into pasture by Sir Roger Dallison. The main focus of this seems to have

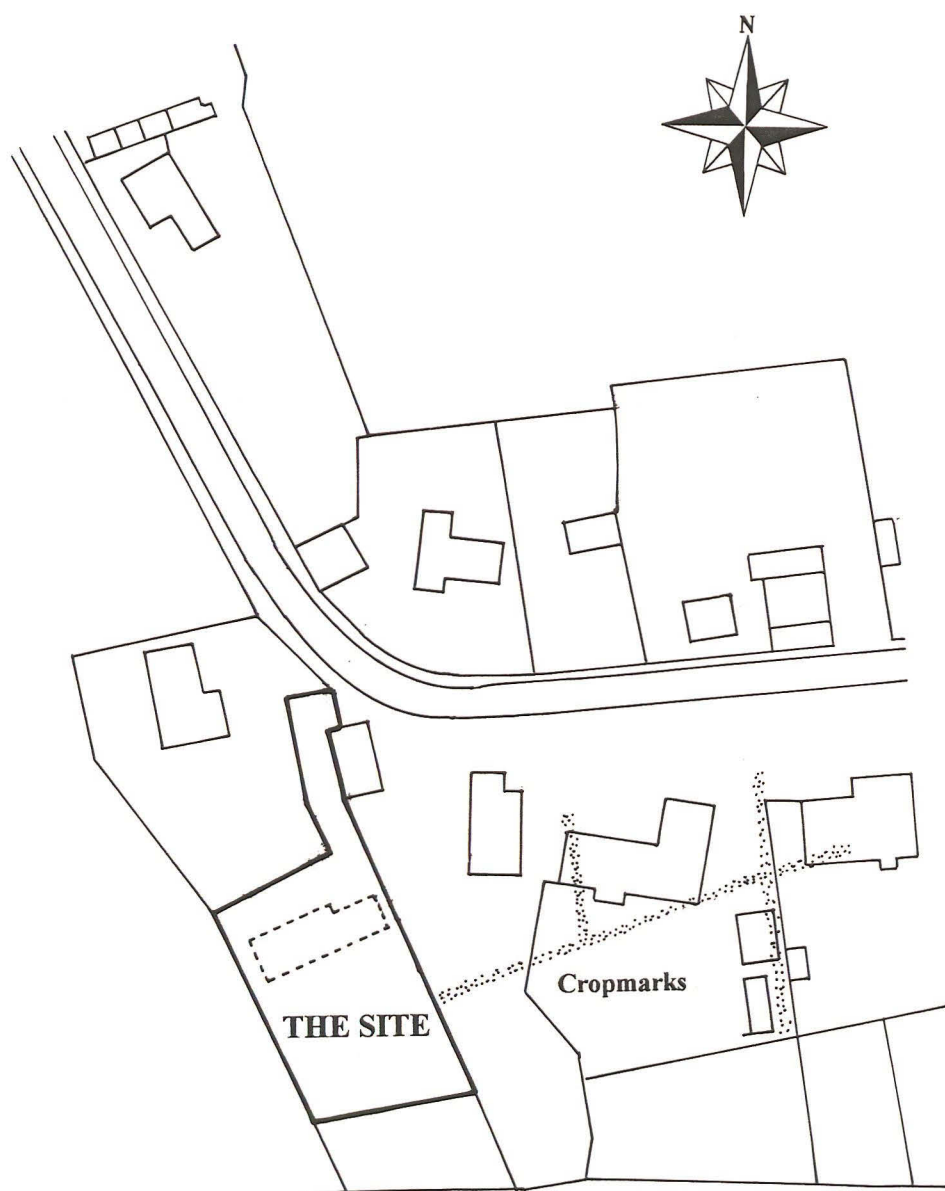


Fig. 2: Site plan showing location of the cropmarks (1:1250).

been the east-west axis of the village (Everson 1991), which includes what is now Morton Road. However, Dallison was caught after embezzling £13,000 of Crown revenue and his Laughton estate, valued at £1,500 pa., was lost (Holmes 1980, 70). The parish was enclosed between 1606 and 1668 (Johnson 1962, 141).

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) on land 100m to the north-east of the development site during April 1998. Post-medieval boundary ditches, known from cropmarks, were located. Pottery and iron smithing slag, dated to the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries was found associated with these and other features (Albone 1998).

4.0 Methodology

The County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) contains entries which indicate the potential for disturbance of archaeological remains within the development site. Cropmarks showing possible medieval or post-medieval boundary ditches are recorded to the east of the site. One of these ditches appears to continue into the development area.

The Assistant County Archaeologist for Lincolnshire issued a brief requiring that an archaeological watching brief be carried out during the groundworks for the development.

Excavation of the foundation trenches was carried out by a mechanical excavator fitted with a 0.65m wide toothed bucket. The topsoil had been stripped prior to the development and the trenches were excavated to a depth of c.0.8m below this level.

Recording was undertaken using standard watching brief record sheets (incorporating physical descriptions, interpretations, and stratigraphic relationships). Features were planned and drawn to scale in section, and photographic recording was undertaken (some prints are reproduced in this report). The drawings, and the rest of the paper record, will form the basis for a long-term project archive. No pottery or other closely datable artefacts were found; only a small quantity of ironworking slag was recovered. No deposits which were considered to have potential for environmental remains were encountered and consequently no sampling was undertaken.

5.0 Results

The continuation of the ditch represented by the cropmarks to the east of the site was not identified during the watching brief. It appears that this ditch runs through the plot just to the south of the foundation trenches. However, five archaeological features, including three ditches and gullies which may have been related to this cropmark, were identified. The locations of these are shown on Fig. 3 and sections are illustrated in Fig. 4.

The two gullies (103 and 108) ran in a west to east direction across the northern part of the house plot 5.5 m apart. The most southerly of these (103) could not be traced

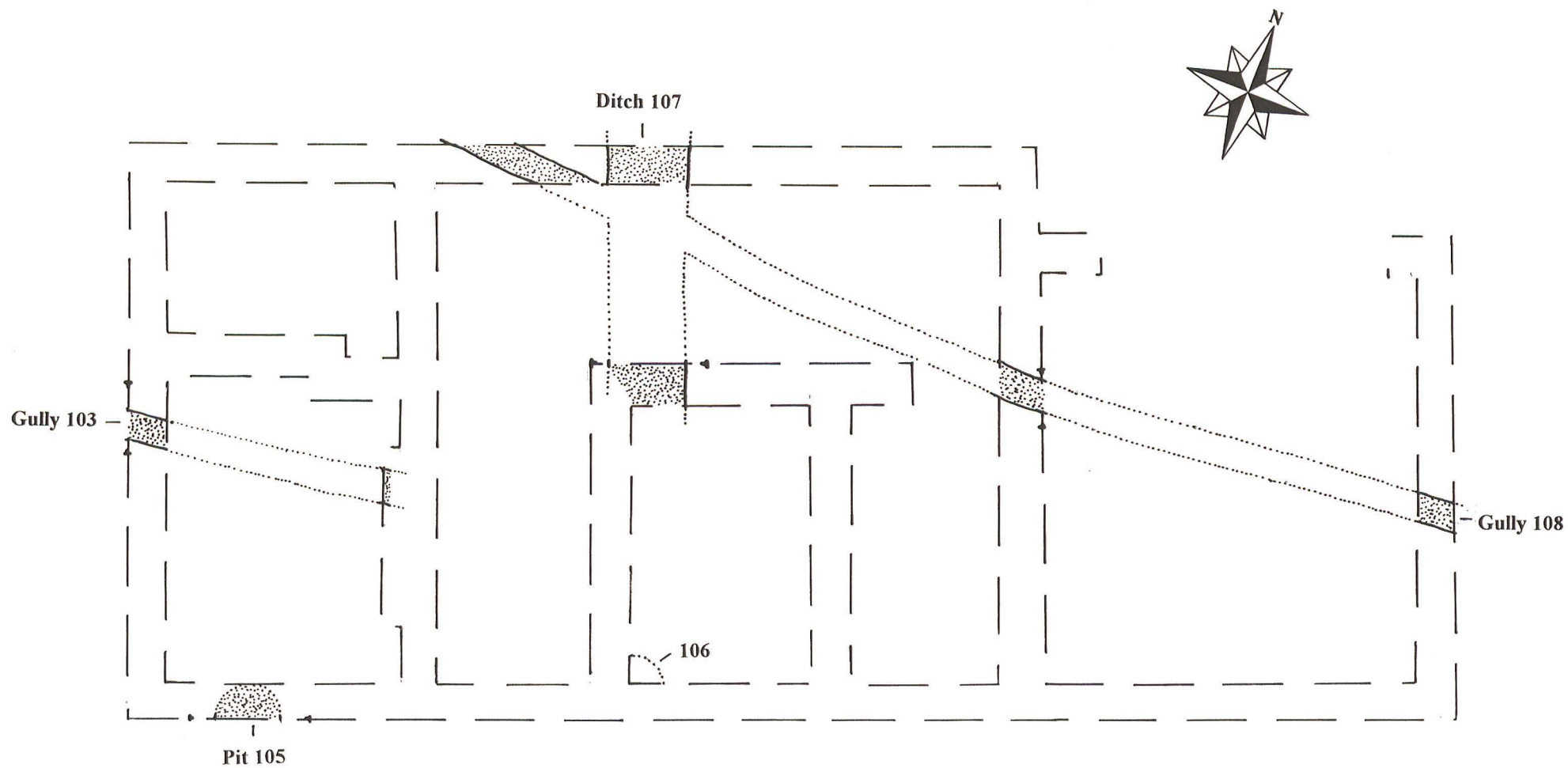


Fig. 3: Plan of the foundation trenches showing the location of archaeological features (1:100).

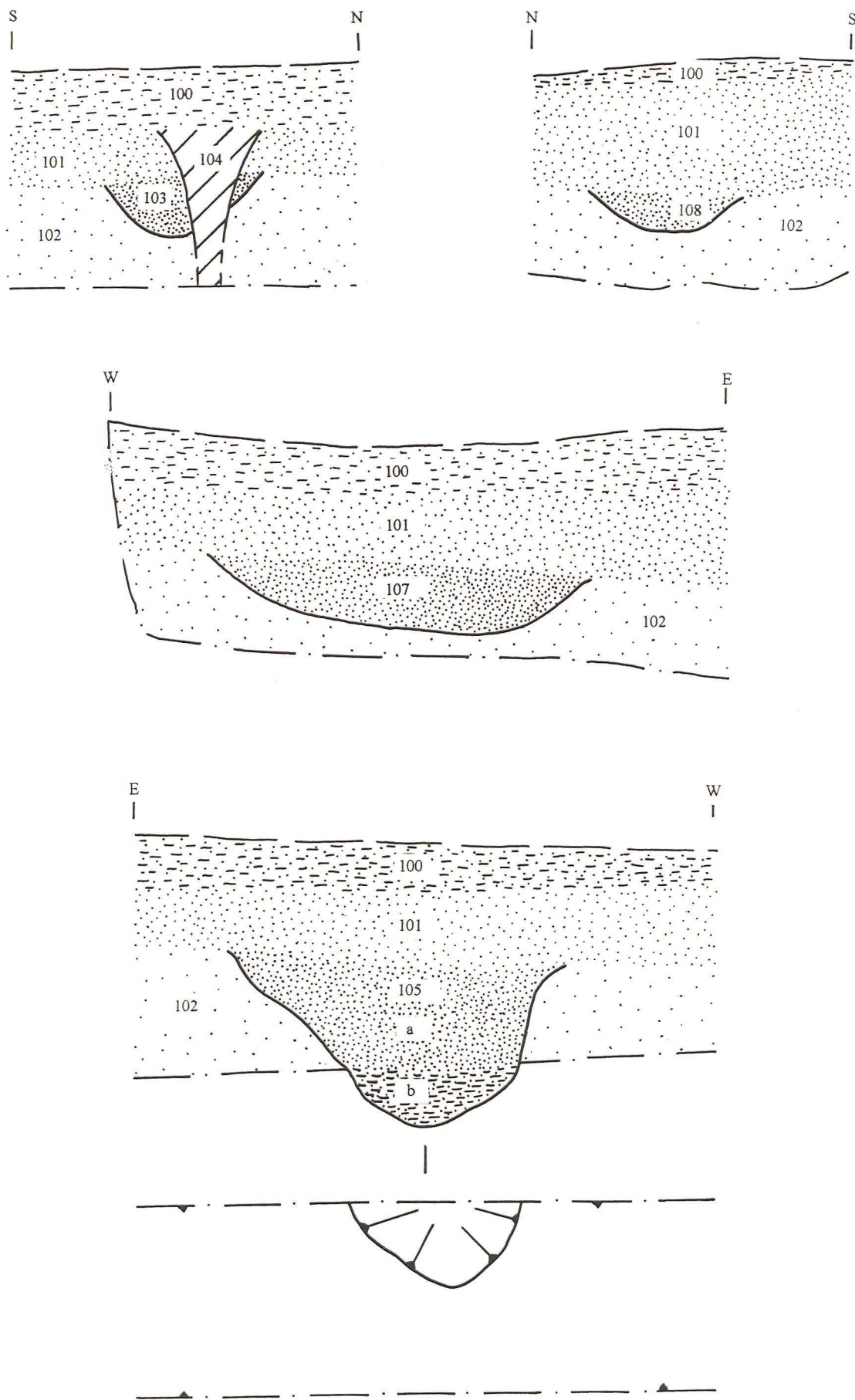


Fig. 4: Sections of archaeological features (1:20).

across the whole of the plot and probably terminated somewhere between the trenches. Both of the features were filled with medium grey to grey-brown sand which did not produce any artefacts.

A shallow ditch (107), which ran in a north-north-west to south-south-east direction, was only visible on the north side of the house plot. Although this ditch crossed the line of gully 108, the relationship between the two lay outside the limits of the trenches. The medium brown sand fill of this feature also produced no artefacts.

A large pit (105) was present on the south side of the house plot. It was filled by an orange brown sand (a) over a dark brown sandy silt (b) which contained small amounts of charcoal. No artefacts were recovered from this feature and its exact function and date remain uncertain.

The only finds that were recovered were pieces of iron working (possibly smithing) slag. These probably date to the post-medieval period. These were found towards the base of the medium grey-brown sand subsoil (101). A discrete group of pieces of slag (106), found on the south side of the plot, may represent an area of smithing activity.

6.0 Discussion and conclusion

Although the watching brief did not locate a continuation of the ditch known from the cropmarks to the east, a number of other features (ditches / gullies and a pit) were identified. However, due the lack of finds from them, only a limited amount can be said about these features.

During the evaluation to the north-east of the site (Albone 1998) similar features were found to contain iron smithing slag and pottery dated to the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. The smithing slag was unusual in that charcoal had been used as fuel instead of coal (Cowgill 1998).

The presence of slag in the subsoil and charcoal in pit 105 may suggest ironworking activity on, or close to the development site. The gullies and ditch probably relate to small paddocks, perhaps dating to before the enclosure of the parish in the seventeenth century.

A disused blacksmiths is situated on Morton Road between the development site and the evaluation site. This may be the source of the slag on the two sites, although it appears to consist of nineteenth century buildings (and is therefore later than the slag). The blacksmiths seems to represent the final phase of a continuity of ironworking activity on the western periphery of the village.

7.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) express their sincere thanks to Mr N. Allison for this commission. Thanks are also extended to Mark Bennet and Sarah Grundy of the County SMR.

8.0 Appendices:

8.1 References

- | | | |
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8.1 Site Archive

Primary records are currently with PCA (Lincoln). An ordered archive of the paper element is in preparation and will be deposited at the City and County Museum, Lincoln, within six months.

The site archive consists of :

Paper Element:

- x 1 Project Specification
- x 5 Watching Brief Record Sheets
- x 6 Site drawings
- x 1 Development plan
- x 2 Colour print films

Object Element:

The only artefacts recovered were the fragments of iron smithing slag.
This material was discarded and not retained for the archive.

8.3 List of Contexts

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 100 | Dark Brown silty sand topsoil (mostly removed). |
| 101 | Medium grey-brown sand subsoil. |
| 102 | Natural yellow/orange sand. |
| 103 | E-W gully filled by medium grey-brown sand. |
| 104 | Modern land drain. |
| 105 | Pit filled with orange-brown sand (a) and dark brown silty-sand (b) containing charcoal. |
| 106 | Layer of slag in base of 101. Possible smithing area? |
| 107 | N-S ditch containing medium brown sand. |
| 108 | E-W gully filled by medium grey sand. |



8.4 Colour Photographs

▲ Pl. 1. General view of the excavation work in progress, looking north-west.

▲► Pl. 2. Pit 105 looking south.

► Pl. 3. Gully 108 looking east.

