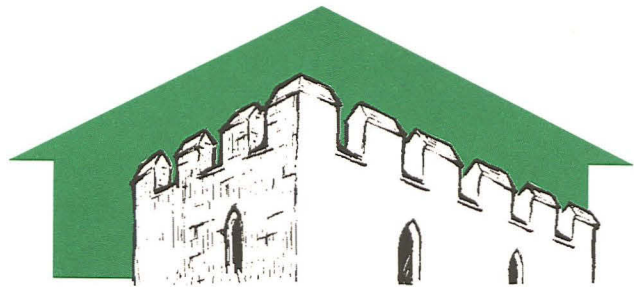


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PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

L I N C O L N

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT:
LAND EAST OF NEWTON ON TRENT, ✕
LINCOLNSHIRE

- ✕ NGR: SK 8420 7435
- ✕ Site Code: NOT00
- ✕ Acc. No.: 2000.254
- ✕ Planning Ref. 99/P/0224



EVENT LI 1399
SOURCE LI 6150/S1
PRN54533 LI 80970

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Report prepared for Palmer Consultancy Services
(on behalf of Premier Poultry Ltd.)
By Mark Allen BSc AIFA
November 2000

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Summary

- ❑ A programme of archaeological trial excavation took place on land situated to the east of Newton on Trent, Lincolnshire.
- ❑ This investigation followed a detailed gradiometer survey, which produced results suggesting the presence of sub-surface remains of potential archaeological interest.
- ❑ Archaeological remains were identified and investigated in only one of the three trenches. This suggests that only a low density of relatively insignificant remains exist across the site.
- ❑ A ditch within Trench 2 contained no dateable material, although it appears to be linked to existing field boundaries, and is likely to be of relatively modern origin.

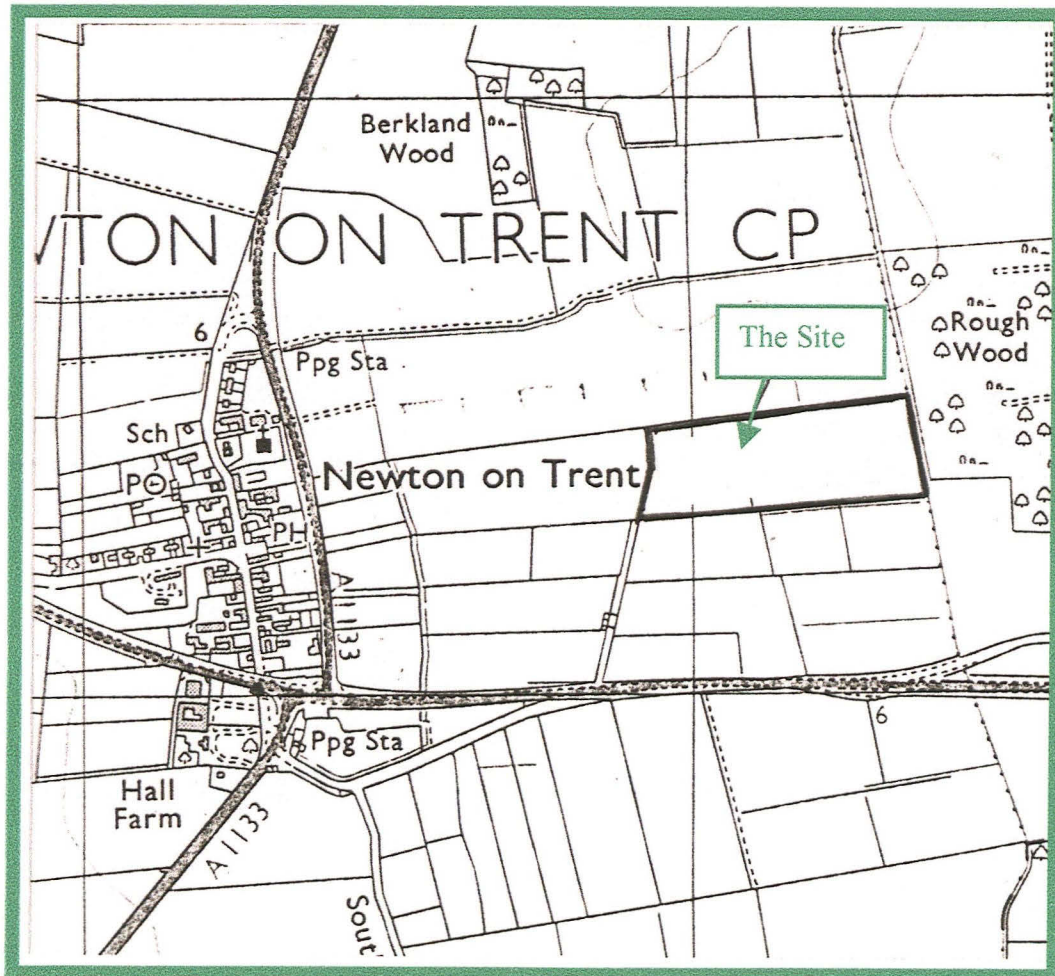


Figure 1: Site location at scale 1: 12,500
(OS Copyright Licence No: A1 515 21 A0001)

1.0 Introduction

Palmer Consultancy Services commissioned Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) to undertake a programme of archaeological investigation on behalf of Premier Poultry Ltd., on approximately 8.0 hectares of land adjacent to Silver Trees Farm, Newton On Trent. These works were commissioned to prefigure and support an application for planning permission, to construct three poultry houses, a managers bungalow and associated infrastructure.

This report details the results of an intrusive investigation that follows a geophysical survey of the site. The text follows current national guidelines (IFA, 1994) and the local guidelines set out in the Lincolnshire County Council document *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: A Manual of Archaeological Practice* (LCC, 1998).

2.0 Location and description

Newton On Trent is approximately 14 kilometres west of Lincoln, 12 kilometres south of Gainsborough, within the administrative district of West Lindsey. The village is situated on the east bank of the River Trent, and the site is approximately 500m east of the village. It comprises a rectangular unit of approximately 8.0 hectares (fig. 1).

The site is currently a pasture field comprising grass and clover vegetation. It is bounded by banks and hedges on all sides. Interspersed amongst hawthorn hedges are several moderately mature oak trees. Pasture fields lie to the south and west, a root vegetable crop to the north, and Rough Wood is to the east. The field was used in relatively recent times for commercial turf cultivation (D. Bunn, pers. com.).

The site occupies relatively flat low-lying ground at c. 5.0m OD. The most significant topographical change is a break of slope c. 300m from the western edge, which slopes downwards towards the eastern site boundary. A slight ridge immediately to the west of the slope may relate to a former hedge line, removed in recent years.

The local drift deposits include pockets of aeolian sand. These mantle Triassic mudstones (BGS 1979).

The Central National Grid Reference is SK 8420 7435.

3.0 Planning background

A planning application has been submitted for a commercial development, consisting of three poultry houses, a manager's bungalow and associated infrastructure. The archaeological works described in this document and a preceding gradiometer survey were undertaken at the request of Premier Poultry Ltd. to fulfil a planning requirement issued by West Lindsey District Council. This approach follows the guidelines set out in *Archaeology and Planning: Planning Policy Guidance Note 16*, 1990.

4.0 Archaeological and historical background

The site is located within a potentially rich archaeological landscape, most of which is known from cropmarks recorded on aerial photographs. Whilst some of these cropmarks may be geological, others appear to indicate different forms of settlement remains.

Cropmarks immediately to the south-west of the site may indicate a prehistoric burial mound (SMR PRN Ref. 52587), and in fields to the north-west, there are possible settlement remains, linear features and enclosures of unknown date (SMR PRN Ref. 52579 and 52586).

Further south, medieval ridge and furrow, a possible prehistoric linear ditch system, and a further ring ditch have also been identified from aerial photographs.

An important early Roman vexillation fortress lies to the southwest of the village. Other Roman remains have been recorded closer to the village when pottery kilns were exposed in 1983 during bypass construction (Field and Palmer-Brown 1991).

Newton is a common name, meaning 'the new farmstead, estate or village' deriving from the Old English *nve + tn* (Mills 1996).

A gradiometer survey of the site in 1999 undertaken by Pre-Construct Geophysics detected low densities of diffuse, linear and curvilinear anomalies of possible archaeological significance (Snee & Bunn 1999).

5.0 Methodology

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) devised a specification for a trenching scheme, which was based on the results of the preceding gradiometer survey. Three trenches were excavated, varying in length from 10m to 20m, all towards the northwest corner of the field. The trenches were selected to traverse geophysical anomalies 1, 2, 4 and 5 (*ibid.*).

A JCB fitted with a 1.6m wide, toothless ditching blade, was used to remove all topsoil and subsoil in spits no greater than 0.2m in depth. This was monitored constantly to ensure that archaeological features were identified. All further excavation was by hand.

Where exposed, archaeological features and deposits were sample excavated to assess their nature, dimensions, and date. The investigations resulted in the production of written descriptions and complementary scale drawings in both plan and section. A photographic record (colour prints) was maintained, and selective prints have been reproduced in this report, with the remainder forming part of the project archive.

An experienced archaeological team of three carried out the excavations over a period of two days – on the 16th and 17th October.

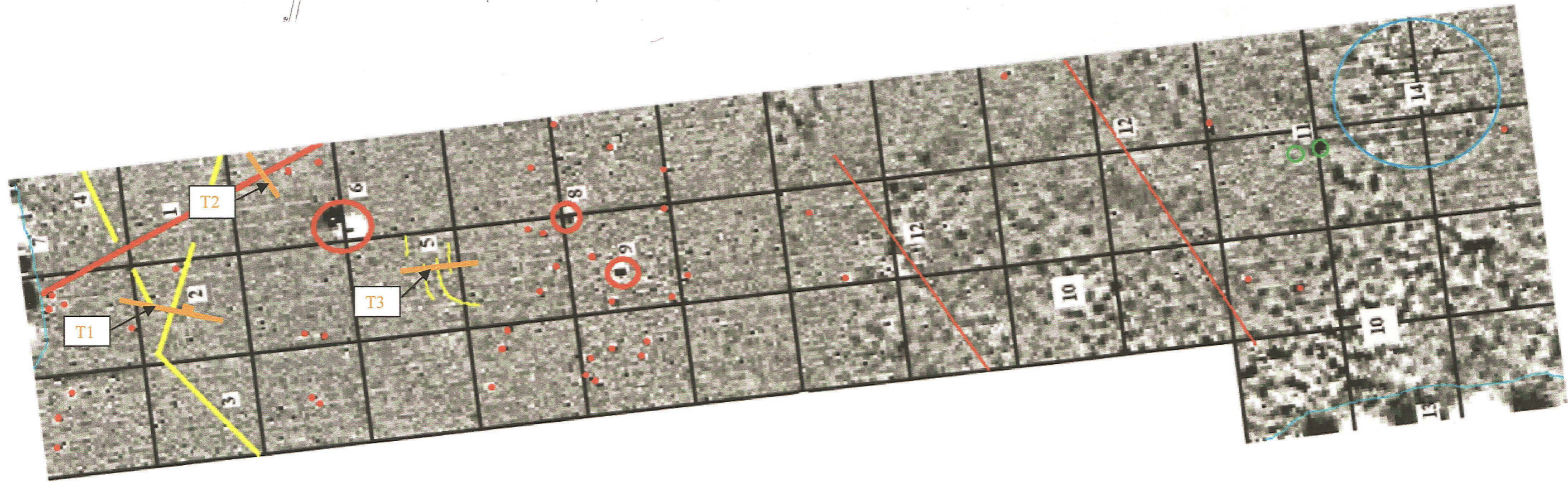
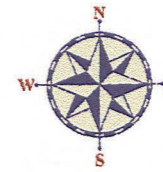
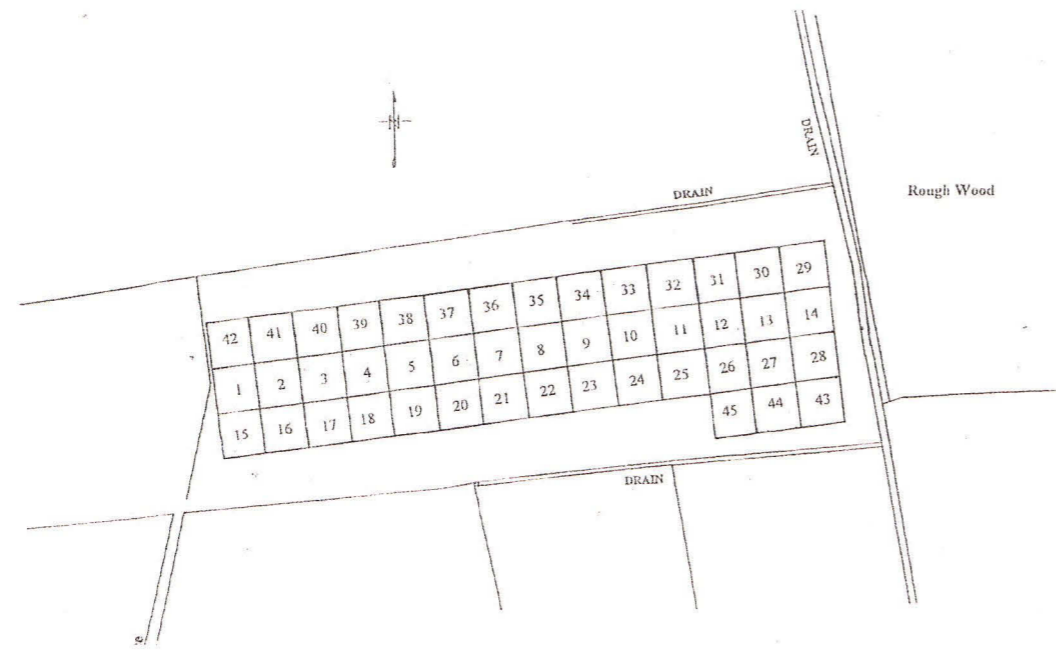


Figure 2: Location of archaeological trenches over geophysical survey Scale 1:1250 (Inset 1:5000)

6.0 Results

The topsoil, a humic sandy loam, had a relatively even thickness across the areas that were investigated, ranging from c. 0.35m to c. 0.45m in depth.

6.1 Trench 1 (See fig. 3)

This trench was positioned close to the western boundary of the site to traverse two magnetic anomalies identified by the gradiometer survey: a faint linear (anomaly 2) orientated northeast – southwest, and anomaly 4; a short, broken linear.

Removal of the topsoil, (100), exposed part of a feature, [104], near the centre of the trench. An extension of 2.25m to the trench revealed the full extent of this feature. This was a disturbed area, probably from tree root activity. The sub-circular feature measured 0.64m by 0.54m in plan, 0.14m in depth. Its fill, (105), was a light grey sand with occasional gravel and manganese fragments, but no finds.

A smaller feature, [102], was exposed within the same extended area. This also was probably part of the same tree root activity.

The two ephemeral linear anomalies were not exposed within the trench. It is suggested either that they did not exist, or that the anomalies occurred within the topsoil and could not therefore be recognised as discrete archaeological features.

6.2 Trench 2 (See fig. 4; pl. 2)

This trench was positioned c. 70m from the north-western corner of the site to investigate a linear anomaly orientated northeast – southwest, which extended beyond the northern and western limits of the survey.

Removal of the topsoil, (200), exposed a single linear ditch, [202], on the predicted orientation. The ditch measured c. 0.72m in width and was 0.25m deep with a 'U'-shaped profile (pl. 3). Its fill, (203), consisted of dark grey silty sand that was devoid of artefacts.

6.3 Trench 3 (See fig. 5; pl. 4)

The trench was c. 40m to the south-east of Trench 2 and was excavated to traverse a series of very faint curvilinear anomalies identified by gradiometry.

Removal of the topsoil exposed a relatively homogenous band of orange/brown sand, (305), at the west end of the trench. Examination of this demonstrated that it represented a slight change to the natural sand.

Towards the centre of the trench, a localised sub-oval area of dark grey/brown sand, (302), was exposed. On excavation this was interpreted as a probable tree void,

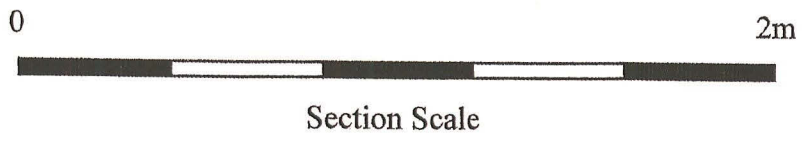
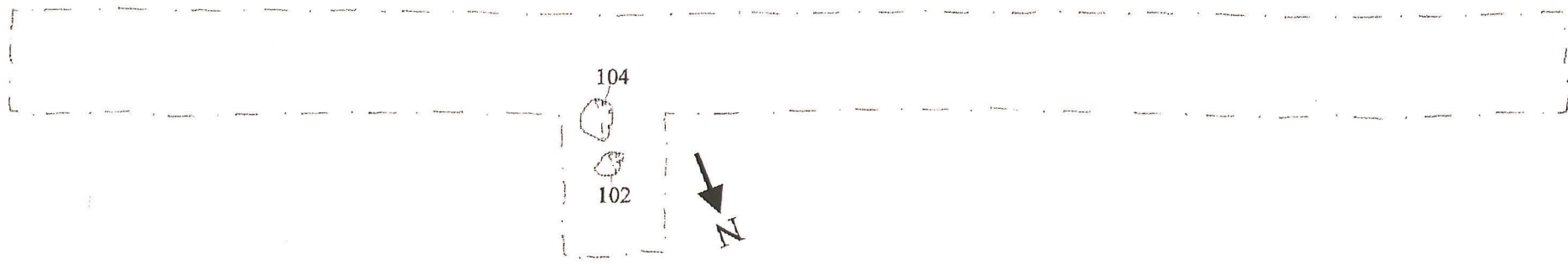
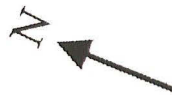
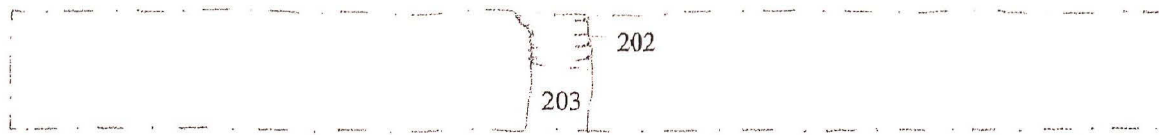
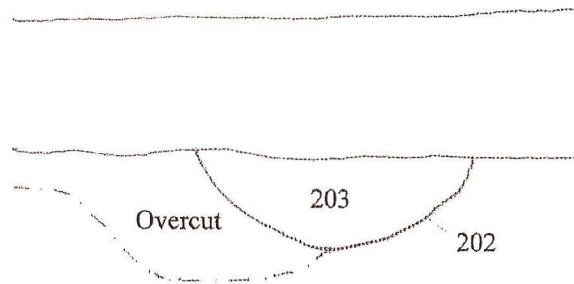


Figure 3: Plan and section of features in trench 1



Plan Scale



Section Scale

Figure 4: Plan and section of features in trench 2

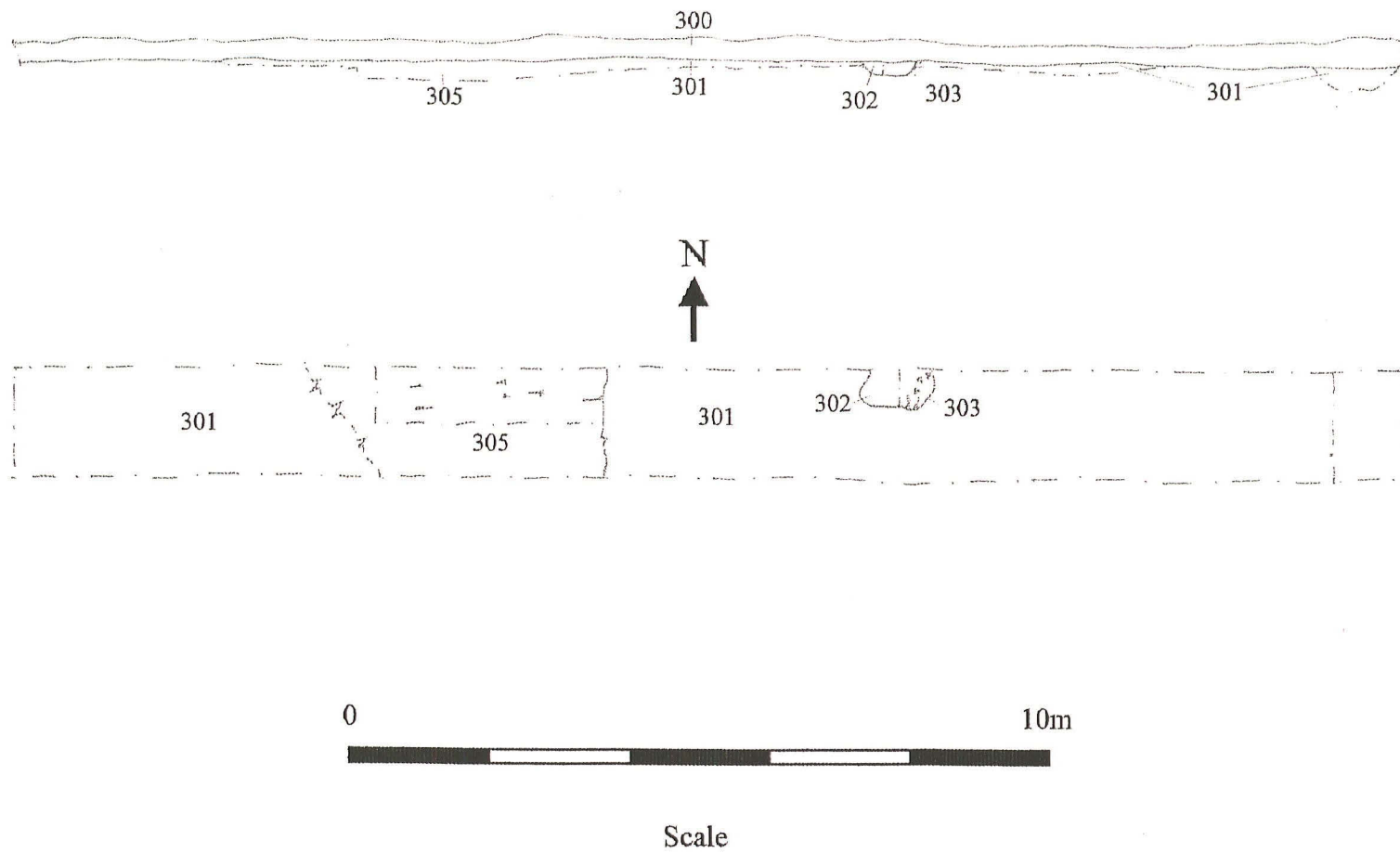


Figure 5: Plan and section of features in trench 3

measuring 0.5m x 0.85m in plan, and surviving to a depth of 0.24m below the ploughsoil.

7.0 Interpretation, discussion and conclusions

The evaluation has demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt that the proposed development site contains very few archaeological deposits, the relative densities and distributions of which were outlined by a preceding gradiometer survey (Snee & Bunn 1999). Some of the anomalies that were detected by gradiometry could not be matched as physical entities beneath the topsoil.

No artefactual material of any period was recovered from the features that were investigated, and no finds were recovered from the topsoil. The latter may have been influenced by the use of the field in recent times for commercial turf cultivation.

The ditch exposed in Trench 2, [202], appeared to extend towards a bend in the west field boundary, suggesting that this feature was itself a former field boundary. Its fill was similar to the topsoil, suggesting perhaps a relatively recent infilling.

Overall, it is concluded that a commercial development on this site will not threaten any significant archaeological remains.

8.0 Effectiveness of methodology

Only one of the three trenches contained archaeological remains, with no artefactual material recovered from any of the deposits exposed. Consequently, it is felt that the evaluation has served its primary purpose by confirming a very low density of archaeological remains.

9.0 Acknowledgments

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank Palmer Consultancy Services (on behalf of Premier Poultry Ltd.) for this commission.

10.0 References

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11.0 Site archive

The site archive (documentary) is in preparation and will be deposited at the Lincoln City and County Museum and the Lincolnshire Archives Office within six months. Access to the archive may be gained by quoting the global accession number 2000.254.

Appendix 12.1: Colour photographs



P1. General view of site,
looking north-east



P2. Trench 2: pre-excitation
shot, looking south-east



P3. Trench 2, ditch [202]
following excavation,
looking north-east



P4. Trench 3, pre-excavation shot,
looking west

Appendix 12.2: List of Archaeological Contexts

Trench 1

<i>Context No.</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Description</i>
100	Layer	Topsoil
101	Layer	Natural
102	Cut	Treebole (undated)
103	Fill	Fill of [102]
104	Cut	Treebole (undated)
105	Fill	Fill of [104]

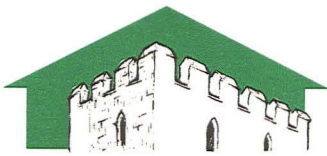
Trench 2

<i>Context No.</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Description</i>
200	Layer	Topsoil
201	Layer	Natural
202	Cut	Ditch aligned NE-SW (?modern)
203	Fill	Fill of [202]

Trench 3

<i>Context No.</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Description</i>
300	Layer	Topsoil
301	Layer	Natural
302	Fill	Fill of [303]
303	Cut	Treebole (undated)
304	Layer	Natural variation
305	Layer	Natural variation

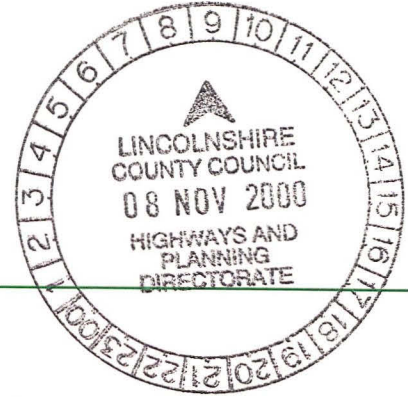
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Dr B Lott
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7th November, 2000

0 8. NOV 00

Dear Beryl,

LAND EAST OF NEWTON ON TRENT (FOR PREMIER POULTRY LTD.)

I dutifully enclose one copy of the final evaluation report on the above.

I am unusually confident that this site, to all intents and purposes, is clear of archaeology. I did in fact have some reservations concerning some of the anomalies that were flagged when the gradiometer survey took place in 1999, but this could not really be confirmed without some form of limited trenching. Only the strongest linear anomaly was matched by a ditch beneath the topsoil (Trench 2), and this showed all the signs of being relatively modern, even though no finds were recovered.

I apologise for the fact that there are no photographs of Trench 1. Mark informed me (only in post-excitation) that he had problems with one of the SLR's and switched to using a compact. Some prints were lost and, unfortunately, these included two general shots of Trench 1. I can only tell you that, when I inspected the site, all that could be seen in Trench 1 was yellow sand that was as clean as a beach.

I have suggested to Palmer Consultancy Services (who act for Premier Poultry) that it is unlikely that archaeology will be a significant limiting factor to this development. I hope that this is correct.

Best regards,

Colin Palmer-Brown.