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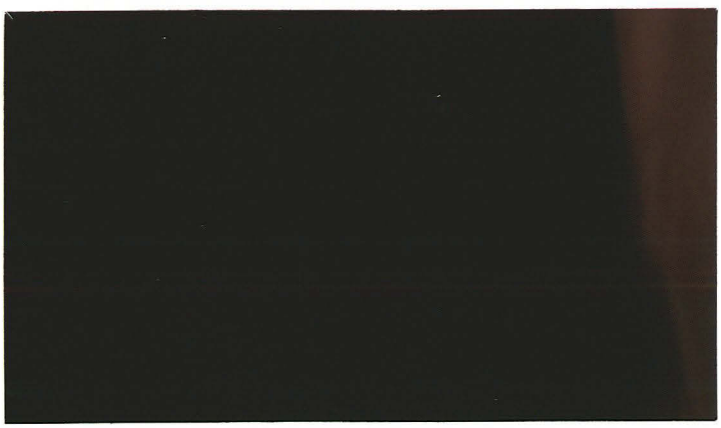
PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

LINCOLN

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT: LAND OFF MILESTONE LANE AND BACONS LANE, PINCHBECK, SPALDING, LINCOLNSHIRE

Site Code:	MLPB01
NGR:	TF 2410 2667, TF 2420 2670,
Planning Ref.	H14/0462/00, H14/0436/00 and
Accession No.	2001.99 463



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Site Code:	MLPB01
NGR:	TF 2410 2667, TF 2420 2670, TF 2426 2680
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Report prepared for Longstaff Chartered Surveyors on behalf of Mr Nell
by Chris Clay

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln)
61 High Street
Newton on Trent
Lincoln
LN1 2JP
Tel. & Fax. 01777 228155

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Summary

- *An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in advance of a residential development and the construction of a lay-by on land off Milestone Lane and Bacon's Lane, Pinchbeck, Spalding, Lincolnshire.*

- *The area is known to have been a focus for the salt making industry throughout the medieval period, although the evidence derived from this project has not produced any clear evidence that salt making was a major activity during occupation of the site*

- *Archaeology was exposed in each of the three trenches, and this dates between the 12th century and the modern era, with most of the activity occurring between the 12th and 16th centuries. In Trench 1, the medieval activity was associated with a series of discrete earth cut features that may represent the truncated remains of sunken feature buildings of several different phases. Investigations in Trench 2 were minimal due to water inundation, and investigations in Trench 3 exposed a complex stratigraphy that incorporated a medieval ditch-like feature that contained large amounts of smithing slag and hammerscale, suggesting that metalworking was taking place in the vicinity of the Bacons Lane frontage. Later activity is reflected by the presence of 15th/16th century ceramic evidence, although several phases of activity could not be dated.*

Figure 1: Location of evaluation areas (Areas A – C) (scale 1:10,000)

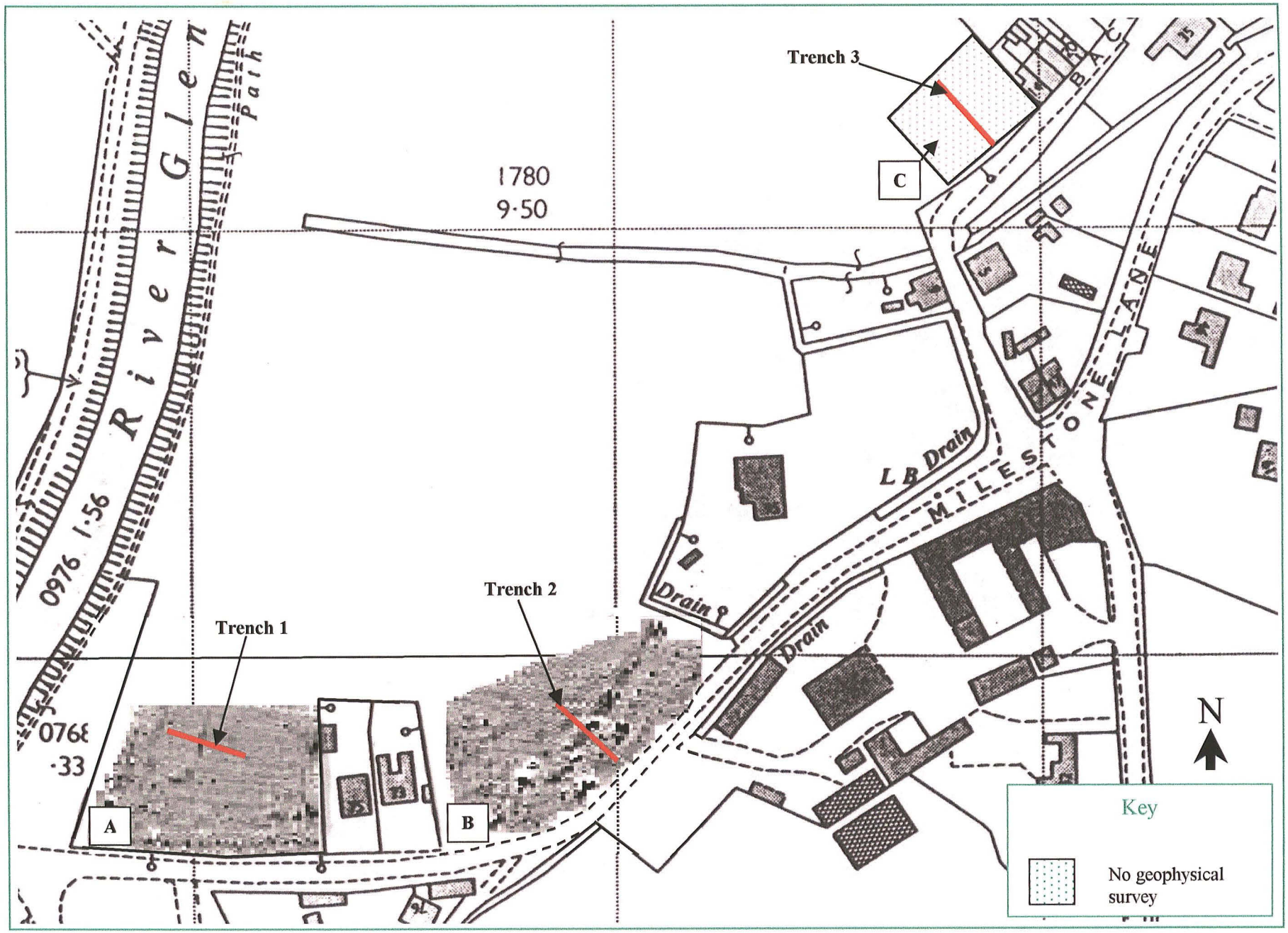

Figure 2: Location of evaluation trenches at scale 1:1250

1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) were commissioned by Longstaff Chartered Surveyors, on behalf of their client, Mr. Nell, to undertake an archaeological evaluation on three areas of land off Milestone Lane and Bacon's Lane, Pinchbeck, Spalding, Lincolnshire.

This report follows a fluxgate gradiometer survey and it documents the results of an intrusive programme of archaeological fieldwork. It is written to conform to national and local guidelines as set out in the Lincolnshire County Council document *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: A Manual of Archaeological Practice* (LCC, 1998), and it follows the recommendations of the Senior Built Environment Officer for Lincolnshire County Council.

2.0 Site location and description

Pinchbeck is in the administrative district of South Holland. It is approximately 3km north of Spalding and 20km south-south-west of Boston.

The site, a composite of three units, is on the northern periphery of the village, in the suburb of Crossgate (see fig. 1). Two areas (A and B) are on the north side of Milestone Lane (centred on NGR TF 2410 2667 and TF 2420 2670 respectively), and the third (Area C) lies on the north-west side of Bacon's Lane (NGR TF 2426 2680). All three units occupy flat, recently ploughed, agricultural land, at a height of between 4-6m OD.

The local drift geology consists of Terrington Beds of younger marine alluvium, salt marsh, tidal creek and river deposits. This seals a solid geology of Middle Oxford Clay (British Geological Survey, 1992). The area has also been subject to the deposition of sediments by localised, intermittent, flooding during and after the Roman period (Lane, 1993).

3.0 Planning background

Planning permission is sought for residential development of Areas A and B (planning refs.: H14/0462/00 and H14/0436/00). The proposed development of Area C is the construction of a lay-by (planning ref.: H14/0465/00). It is conditional that the archaeological potential of these areas should be addressed in advance of the granting of the planning permission (ie the purpose of the evaluation is to inform the planning decision).

4.0 Archaeological and historical background

The earliest recorded archaeological activity derives from a single Roman coin of the Emperor Commodus (AD180-192), which was discovered at Pinchbeck Hall, to the south of the current investigation.

The first historical reference to the settlement comes from a charter of AD810, when Aelfgar granted land in Pinchbeck to Siward, Abbot of Crowland (Sawyer, 1998). However, investigations in the area around Spalding indicate that the region has been settled since at least the sixth century, and may be associated with the *Spalda*, a tribal subdivision of the kingdom of Mercia, recorded in the Tribal Hidage (*ibid*).

At the time of the Domesday Survey, the village was populated by 22 Freemen, 23 villagers and 12 smallholders, and was a jurisdiction of the Spalding manor of Ivo Tallboys. Guy of Craon also owned some land here (Morgan & Thorne, 1986).

One of the principal medieval industries of the area was salt making, which was first historically documented for Pinchbeck in the early thirteenth century (Hallam, 1960). Pinchbeck was very close to the early medieval coastline (British Geological Survey, 1992), and was therefore ideally situated to exploit salt rich coastal sand and alluvial deposits. This activity appears to have been focused on the area of Surfleet, 3km north-east of the current site (Hallam, 1960). The results of a recent evaluation at Spalding Golf Club, Surfleet, support this view, producing evidence of salt making during the 12th/13th centuries (Rylatt 2001).

The Domesday Book records salt making activities at the nearby villages of Bicker, Donington, Gosberton, and Quadring (Morgan & Thorne, 1986), which run north-west from Pinchbeck, following the early medieval coastline (British Geological Survey, 1992). The salt industry continued in Pinchbeck through much of the medieval period, the last historical reference being in 1477 (Hallam, 1960).

A geophysical survey of Areas A and B (Rylatt & Bunn, 2001) detected a number of magnetic anomalies of potential archaeological significance. In Area A, two possible sub-rectangular enclosures were detected in the northern half of the survey. A linear anomaly, interpreted as a former field boundary, ran along the southern edge of the area. In Area B, a series of linear anomalies were detected, one of which was interpreted as a disused portion of an extant dyke, which is visible to the north east of the trench.

5.0 Methodology

The three trenches were approximately 20m in length (see fig.2). Machining was carried out using a JCB fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching blade. The ploughsoil and subsoil was removed in spits of approximately 0.2m, until archaeological deposits were encountered. Excavation was then carried out by hand in order to establish the profile, orientation, depth and (where possible) date of features/remains. Archaeological deposits were drawn in plan and in section, and a colour photographic record was maintained throughout the project, from which selective prints are reproduced in this report (Appendix 1).

Trench 1 in Area A was aligned approximately west-north-west to east-south-east. It was positioned to investigate two possible sub-rectangular enclosures, recorded by the preceding geophysical survey (anomalies 4 and 5).

Trench 2 was aligned north-west to south-east across the centre of Area B. It was positioned to traverse a series of linear geophysical anomalies (3 and 13).

Trench 3 was positioned close to a hedge line that is the south-east edge of Area C. It was orientated north-west to south-east in an area that was not subjected to geophysical survey.

6.0 Results

6.1 Trench 1 (fig.3)

A series of flat-bottomed features were exposed in this trench. Initially, it was suggested that these were in some way associated with the processing of marine salt (eg filtration units); however, a selective assessment of content has identified a range of artefactual/ecofactual remains that are more indicative of domestic occupation. This occupation appears to have occurred between the 12th and 16th centuries AD, and the most likely interpretation of the features is that they represent the surviving elements of sunken feature buildings.

The earliest exposed was a dark orange sandy silt, (152), that occupied the central and east side of the trench. This appeared to be a natural alluvial deposit, and it pre-dated the earliest phase of archaeology.

At the west-north-west end of the trench was a large ?sub-rectangular feature [102], that measured approximately 13m from east to west. This was 0.65m deep, and its east edge was very steep (shallower on the south side). Its base was predominantly flat. Two sub-circular hollows were exposed at the eastern end of the feature, each approximately 0.6m in diameter and 0.1m deep.

The lower fills within [102] consisted of pale brown and orange sandy silts (139, 140, 146). These deposits were sealed 0.05m of dark grey sandy silt containing frequent flecks of charcoal (138, 145). Samples from these deposits were submitted for environmental assessment (Appendix 3), and this revealed that both deposits incorporated waterlogged remains (including a small wooden point from context (138). Both incorporated compressed matted plant remains that may have been collected and dumped into the feature; possibly representing a vegetation spread over an earth floor. These deposits were beneath a second group of orange and pale brown sandy silt deposits, interspersed with two further narrow bands of burnt material (135, 131). Context 136, which lay directly beneath (135), contained an almost complete ceramic vessel, sitting upright within the context. This was handmade, and was heavily burnt on the outside, with a carbonised deposit on the base internally. The pot itself has been dated to the 12th/13th century, and this contained burnt and unburnt material that was also submitted for environmental assessment. This incorporated an assemblage that is of a typically domestic nature: charred grain, animal bone, burnt eel and other small fish bones, bird eggshell, charcoal and pottery fragments. The upper bulk fill of [102] consisted of pale greyish brown silt, (130), approximately 0.3m deep. This contained two sherds of late twelfth to thirteenth century Stamford

Ware pottery.

Less than 1m east of [102] was a second, seemingly similar, feature, [103]. This appeared to be orientated north to south, although the limited plan that was accessible for study has precluded a definitive statement. It was approximately 0.2m deep, with a flat base and relatively gentle sides. The feature contained a pale grey silty basal deposit (129), with overlying iron panning, (128). Above this was a deposit of grey, charcoal-rich, fine silt, (121) that extended to an adjacent feature, [104]. Morphologically, this feature (which was not dated) resembled [102]. One sherd of pottery was recovered from (121): dated to the late 11th – mid-12th century.

The above was cut by [127], a feature with a shallow bowl shaped profile, approximately 0.7m wide and 0.2m deep. This was only examined in the north section face, and could not be interpreted. It was filled with two similar undated deposits of dark grey, charcoal rich silt (125, 126).

Approximately 0.75m east-south-east of [103] was another earth-cut feature, [104]. A portion of this measuring approximately 4m by 0.6m was visible in plan, truncated by [105] to the east. It had gently sloping sides and a familiar flat base, and survived to a depth of approximately 0.15m. Functionally, one would anticipate this to be the same as [102] and [103]. It was not dated.

At the east end of Trench 1 was a large feature, [105]. This appeared to be linear in plan, aligned north to south. It was approximately 3.4m wide and 0.5m deep. Both the base and sides of the feature were uneven, although the base was predominantly flat. Its internal stratigraphy was relatively complex, comprising lenses of silty soil incorporating occasional mussel shells, animal bones and pottery sherds. One deposit, (115), contained high levels of charred material and incorporated organic remains. Associated pottery dates the feature between the 14th and 16th centuries. It was sealed by two deposits of light greyish-brown silt (106, 107), that contained pottery broadly dating to the 12th to 16th centuries.

All of the features and deposits in this trench were sealed by a 0.3m deep dark grey silty ploughsoil (100), and an underlying subsoil horizon, (101) of brownish grey silt. Both deposits contained 16th/17th century pottery.

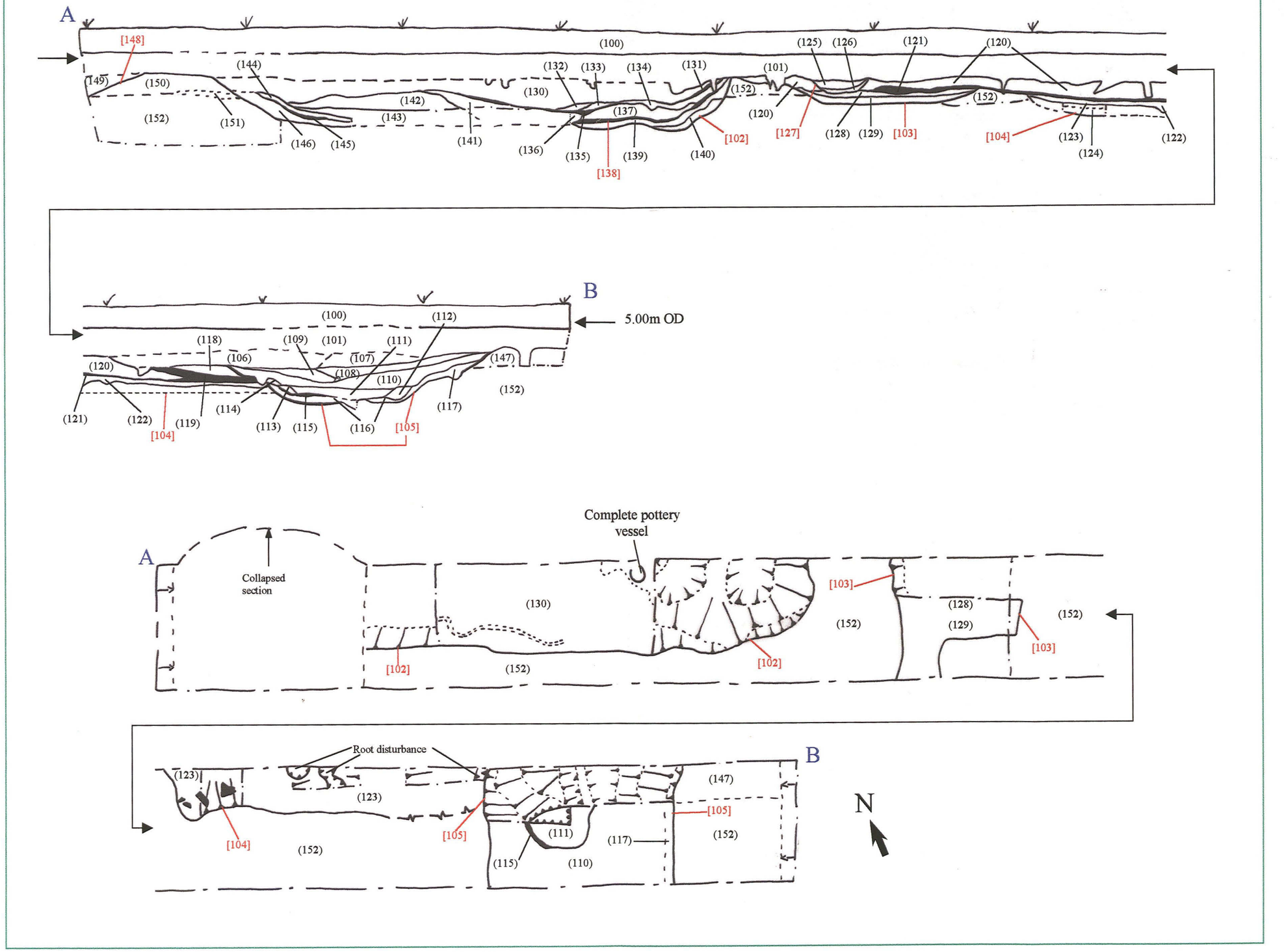

Figure 3: Trench 1 plan and section at scale 1:50

6.2 Trench 2 (fig.4)

The gradiometer survey detected a series of linear anomalies that were orientated north-east to south-west. The trial excavation revealed features that matched this pattern, although the features themselves were poorly understood due to uncontrollable water inundation. The features reflect the orientation of an existing series of boundaries; based on the orientation of Milestone Lane itself and a discontinuous field boundary to its north-west. Only the upper fills of two ditches produced finds, indicative of backfilling in recent times. However, excavations were minimal, and it was not established whether or not there were earlier remains in this part of the site.

The conditions in this trench were extremely wet and, according to local residents, the field is notorious for its high water content. Despite the use of a pump, the trench rapidly filled with water, making excavation almost impossible, and precluding any detailed investigation. The narrative presented below, therefore, is not supplemented with illustrations, excluding a shallow feature that was exposed at the north end of the trench (fig. 4).

Three large linear features were exposed. Towards the south-east end of the trench, the first of these, [205], was approximately 2m wide, running approximately south-west to north-east. It contained a conspicuously dark upper fill, (207), that incorporated charcoal flecks, twentieth century brick, pottery, and chipboard. Clearly, this feature represents a roadside ditch that was backfilled in very recent times.

Approximately 5m north-west of the above was ditch [204]. This was also approximately 2m wide and aligned south-west to north-east. Its upper fill, (206), was again a very dark clay-silt, containing charcoal fragments and twentieth century pottery sherds. This was probably a forerunner of an existing drain that is located to the north-east of the trench, as suggested by the preceding geophysical survey (Rylatt & Bunn, 2001).

The third linear feature, [209] was probably a precursor to the above, as it was truncated on its south-east side by [204]. Its fill, (203), was a dark grey clay-silt. A slot was excavated through the south-east edge of the ditch to a depth of approximately 0.5m, exposing one steep edge. Further excavation was prevented due to the high water table.

Cut into (203), was [208], measuring approximately 2.6m wide by 0.7m deep. This feature had a flat base and relatively steep sides. A narrow band of charcoal-rich silt, (202) formed the primary fill of this feature. The upper fill resembled the overlying subsoil, (201).

The deposit sequence was sealed by a dark grey silty ploughsoil (200), which overlay a subsoil horizon of dark brown silty soil, (201).

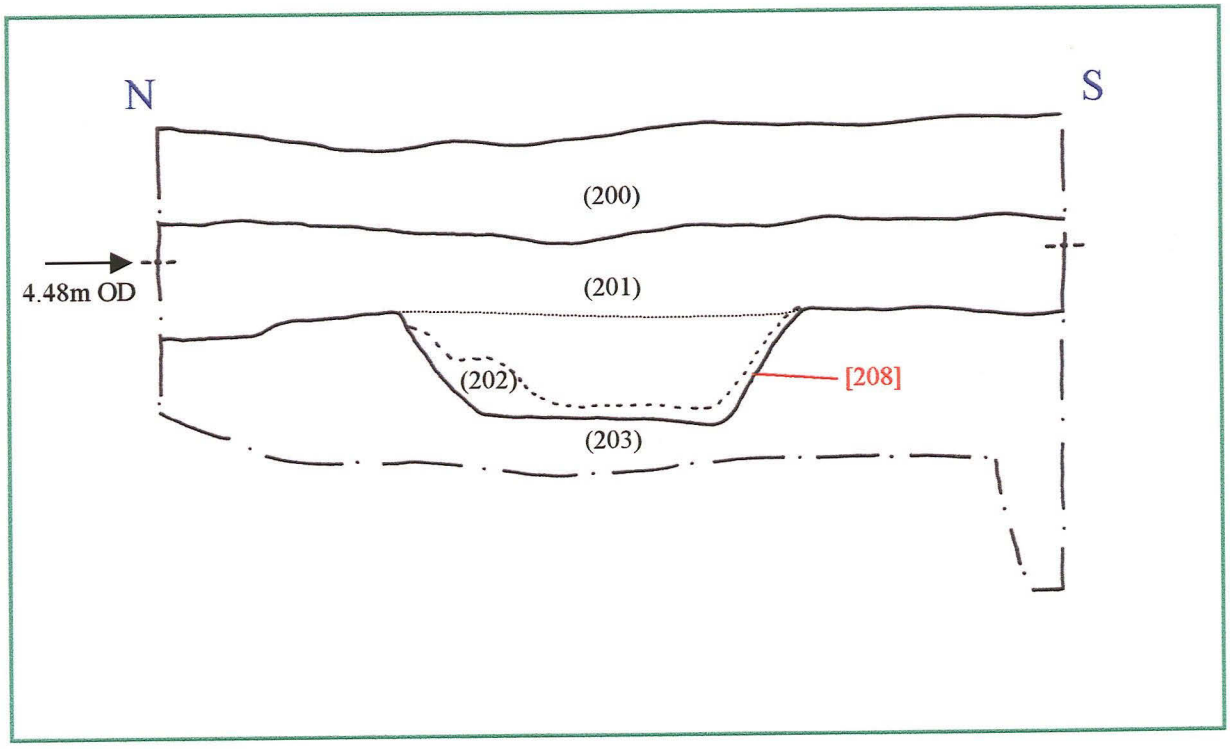

Figure 4: North end of Trench 2; feature [208] west-facing section at scale 1:20

6.3 Trench 3 (fig.5)

A complex stratigraphic sequence was examined adjacent to the Bacons Lane frontage. The earliest dated activity related to a substantial medieval ditch-like feature that may have lain adjacent to an area of iron working (smithing). Later dated features are indicative of activity during the 15th/16th centuries. Several features and deposits could not be dated.

This trench exposed a dense concentration of archaeological features and deposits that incorporated several superimposed stratigraphic phases (relatively unusual in a rural context). In view of this, and taking into consideration the time constraints that existed, a decision was taken to machine excavate the trench to an arbitrary level; that would allow later features to be exposed in section, and earlier features to be examined in plan.

The earliest deposits exposed, (332), (337), (338), comprised a series of mixed orange and grey silts, that reflected natural alluviation that pre-dated any sustained occupation at the site. These deposits may have filled a natural void that was not investigated; as indicated by their relatively steep relief. They were sealed beneath horizontal deposits of silt-based soil that may have been associated with widespread flooding that also pre-dated any activity at the site, (325) and (328).

Cut through the top of (325), the earliest archaeological feature, [314], was heavily truncated. It was filled with orange silty soil, (326) that resembled the natural alluvium, (332) (?re-deposited in this context).

The above was cut by a moderately substantial linear ditch-like feature, [306], that was approximately 0.8m deep. Its two discernible bulk fills, (330) and (331), were relatively similar in composition, consisting of grey silt that incorporated dirty yellow patches. The lower fill, (331) was distinguished by occasional laminations of orange silt, and (330) contained relatively large amounts of ironworking (smithing) slag: mostly hearth bottoms (J Cowgill, pers. com.). This context also produced significant amounts of hammerscale (Appendix 3), suggesting that iron smithing was taking place in the vicinity of ditch [306]. Bourne and Stamford wares were recovered from context (330), providing a late 12th to 14th century date.

A narrow undated gully was cut through the top of (330); [313].

Three narrow linear features, [302], [303], and [304], were exposed to the south-east of [306], and these may have been contemporary. [302] was nebulous, and may have been a natural hollow. [304] was a straight sided trench that exceeded 1m deep: [303] was a less uniform and shallower gully. All three features were with by a similar, undated, light grey silty deposit, (328).

All of the deposits and features described above were sealed beneath (317), (318) and (323), all of which consisted of mid to dark brown silty soils that incorporated occasional flecks of charcoal and moderate amounts of undated brick and tile fragments. (323) contained ten sherds of late 15th/16th century pottery, dominated by Bourne Ware. These layers were interpreted as either demolition deposits relating to

former structures or material imported to build up the ground surface. Overlying (317), contexts (319) and (320) contained a greater frequency of brick rubble and dust and small limestone chunks (conceptually the same as (317)).

Cut through (317) and an overlying deposit, (323), was [310], which occupied the approximate centre of the trench. The lower portion of this was vertically sided, and its base was flat (visible in both section faces). However, the upper void was very shallow. It was filled with dirty yellow silty soil, (327) that was not dated by any associated artefacts. A shallow bowl shaped feature, [308], was cut through the top of this.

The east side of [310] truncated a similarly aligned linear feature [305], the base of which had a U-shaped profile. Its upper void, like [310], was vague, where it shallowed to become almost level. Its grey/brown silty fill, (321), contained small amounts of charcoal, brick fragments and a thin capping lens of limestone fragments.

At the south-east end of the trench, (317) was truncated by a vertically sided and flat-bottomed and undated feature, [307]. Its fill comprised dirty yellow silt, (316). This was similar to the fill of [310], although, stratigraphically, contemporaneity would seem unlikely.

The south-east side of [307] was cut by a linear feature, [309], which also was only examined in the north and south section faces. The lower void of this trench-like feature was 0.25m wide where it adjoined vertical sides that shallowed in a similar manner as [310] and [307]. Its bulk fill, (315), was an homogenous brown silt that incorporated small fragments of brick. Above this, (334) contained significant quantities of hand made brick. This feature may have been the cut for a hedge line representing another redundant field boundary.

Several discrete features were exposed in plan. At the south-east end of the trench, a vertically sided ?sub-circular feature, [301] was exposed, disappearing beyond the east section face. It was excavated to a depth of approximately 0.4m,, and its fill, produced two sherds of 16th century Bourne ware pottery.

A small sub-oval pit, [312], was exposed at the north-west end of the trench. This was filled with a dark grey silt, (336) that incorporated two sherds of 10th to 12th century Thetford Ware. Approximately 1.5m east of this was a similar but smaller feature, [311], filled with dark grey silt, (335). Although undated, the feature contained small amounts of charcoal and brick dust.

The overall sealing deposit was the ploughsoil, (300) which had a maximum depth of 0.3m.

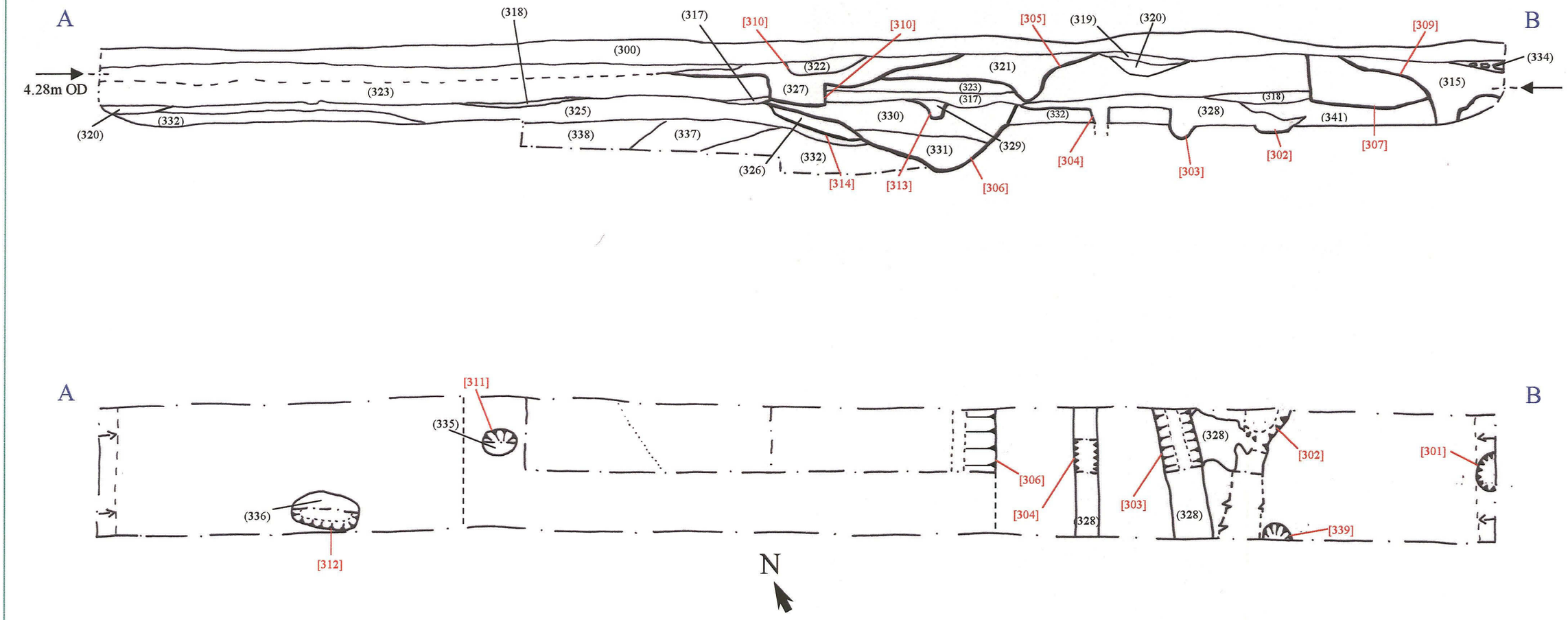

Figure 5: Trench 3 plan and section at scale 1:50

7.0 Discussion and conclusion

Although some features that were investigated during this evaluation were thought superficially to have been associated with industrial salt processing during the medieval period (eg features in Trench 1), the bulk of evidence cannot support this interpretation. It is much more likely that the earth-cut, flat-bottomed, features exposed in Trench 1 represent the truncated remains of medieval sunken feature buildings. This interpretation is supported by the domestic finds assemblage, and by the range of ecofactual remains that have been identified in the soil samples. In essence, all lines of evidence point towards a domestic, rather than an industrial, assemblage.

Sunken feature buildings are well documented in Lincolnshire and in other areas of England, although they are usually associated with earlier phases of archaeological activity, originating with the so-called *grubenhauser* in the early Saxon period. Examples of such buildings have been recorded in the heart of the Lincolnshire fens at Church Road in Boston (Palmer-Brown 1996), where two structures were dated to the middle Saxon period. The occurrence of potentially similar structures in significantly later contexts is of some local interest and importance, and it may help to explain why so few domestic structures of medieval date are identified during evaluations in the fenland – all too often, medieval settlement remains are recorded in cut features such as pits and ditches that contain copious quantities of refuse, yet the structures that compliment these remains are rarely encountered, even adjacent to known medieval frontages. The possibility, therefore that vernacular structures were made predominantly from bio-degradable materials or from materials that leave little trace in the ground has always been a consideration. In this respect, the identification of what may be late examples of sunken feature buildings at Pinchbeck is of some considerable local importance, and there is little doubt that further remains of this nature will occur in the vicinity of Trench 1 to the north of Milestone Lane.

In Trench 2, the linear features exposed produced pottery of 19th and 20th century date, however investigations in this area were severely limited by water inundation, resulting in the production of an incomplete record. Work in this area did establish a series of linear features that correspond with anomalies that were identified by geophysics. These anomalies can be linked to existing field boundaries and frontage alignments, although their origins have not been determined.

Trench 3 contained a considerable density of archaeological cut features, reflecting several phases of activity, dating between the 12th and 16th centuries, and possibly earlier. For the later phases, relatively large amounts of brick rubble were exposed within a number of the upper deposits, suggesting that these are demolition deposits from former structures that stood in the vicinity of the excavation, or that material was imported to the site to purposefully raise the ground surface. The low lying fenland environment around Pinchbeck has been prone to intermittent flooding prior to the establishment of effective drainage in the 18th/19th centuries.

In consideration of the proposed developments, it is clear that archaeology is a significant material factor that will require formal integration within the planning process. The developer has indicated that ground reduction within the vicinity of Trench 3 will be minimal, and long term preservation *in situ* may be a possibility in

this area (ie it may be possible to construct the lay-by over the top of the archaeology to preserve this indefinitely). The area of Trench 1 may be more problematic due to the quality and significance of the archaeological remains in this area and their relatively close proximity to the modern ground surface. A standard pattern of strip footings and the impacts from, for example, sewer construction, would certainly threaten the resource. A mitigation strategy for this area will require consideration. The archaeology in the vicinity of Trench 2 has been less thoroughly defined, although the evaluation established that this area incorporates a series of linear boundaries that are reflected in the contemporary landscape. Inevitably, there will be further, unquantified remains in this area that will require consideration. However, the evaluation did not identify any building remains, and the evidence from geophysics suggests that the archaeology is dominated by a series of respecting linear boundaries that perhaps originated at some time during the medieval period, although this was not proved.

8.0 Effectiveness of methodology

The methodology chosen was appropriate. The gradiometer survey of the site has allowed a number of anomalies of potential archaeological significance to be identified, and subsequent trial trenching has added to the results of this survey to varying levels, including an assessment of the date range of the archaeology, and an appraisal of its significance within the local framework. Certainly, the planning authority should now have sufficient information on which to base any subsequent planning decision.

9.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank the commissioning client, Longstaff Chartered Surveyors, who act on behalf of Mr. Nell.

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11.0 Site archive

The documentary archive for the site is currently in the possession of Pre-Construct Archaeology. This will be deposited at Lincoln City and County Museum within six months. Access to the archive may be gained by quoting the global accession number 2001.99.

Appendix 1 Colour plates

P1. General pre-excavation view, T1, looking east (feature [102] in foreground, [105] in background

P2. Possible sunken feature building [102], part-excavated, showing complete pottery vessel in situ, looking north

P3. Feature [105], looking north

P4. Trench 2 following initial machine clearance/cleaning, looking north

P5. The same view following flooding

P6. General pre-excavation shot. Trench 3, looking south-east

P8. Trench 3: gullies [302], [303], [304], looking north-east

P7. General post-excavation view, Trench 3, looking north

Appendix 2

Archive Report on the Pottery from an Evaluation at Milestone Lane, Pinchbeck, Spalding (MLB01)

Jane Young
Lindsey Archaeological Services

Introduction

A total of 147 sherds of pottery representing about 50 vessels were recovered from the site. The material ranges in date from the Saxo-Norman to the post-medieval period. The pottery was examined both visually and using a x20 magnification, then recorded on an Access database using locally and nationally agreed codenames.

Condition

The pottery recovered was in variable condition with most sherds showing some small degree of abrasion. Three near complete vessels in good condition were amongst the pottery found. Most of the coarse ware vessels have thick exterior soot residues and one vessel has a carbonised deposit on the interior base. Calcareous inclusions have been leached from the interior surfaces of several vessels suggesting their use for containing or heating acidic liquids.

Overall Chronology and Source

A range of 18 different, identifiable pottery ware types were found on the site, the type and general date range for these fabrics are shown in Table 1. A limited range of vessel types was recovered including examples of bowls, jugs, jars, cups and a bunghole jug.

Table 1: Pottery codenames and date range with total quantities by sherd and vessel count

codename	full name	earliest date	latest date	sherds	vessels
BOU	Bourne D ware	1450	1650	53	12
BOUA	Bourne-type Fabrics A, B and C	1150	1350	7	6
CIST	Cistercian-type ware	1480	1650	2	2
DST	Developed Stamford ware	1150	1230	1	1
EMX	Non-local Early Medieval fabrics	1150	1230	2	2
GRIMT	Grimston-type ware	1200	1550	1	1
LMLOC	Late Medieval local fabrics	1350	1550	3	3
MEDLOC	Medieval local fabrics	1150	1450	4	3
MEDX	Non Local Medieval Fabrics	1150	1450	1	1
NOTG	Nottingham glazed ware	1250	1500	1	1
RGRE	Reduced glazed red earthenware	1600	1850	1	1
SLOOL	South Lincs Oolitic (generic)	1050	1500	1	1

SLQSO	South Lincolnshire Quartz Shell & Oolite	1100	1250	35	1
SLSHCW	South Lincolnshire Shell-tempered	1100	1450	14	1
ST	Stamford Ware	970	1200	11	5
TB	Toynton/Bolingbroke wares	1450	1750	5	5
THETT	Thetford-type fabrics	1000	1150	2	1
TOY	Toynton Medieval Ware	1250	1450	3	3

Almost all of the material dates to between the 12th and 16 centuries (see Table 2) and although a few sherds are present that may be of both later and earlier date.

Table 2: Vessel counts by chronological period

ceramic period	Trench 1	Trench 3	Total vessels
Saxo-Norman (10th to 12th)	0	1	1
Saxo-Norman to early medieval (11th to 12th)	4	2	6
Early medieval (12th to early/mid 13th)	5	0	5
Medieval (13th to 15th)	9	6	15
Late medieval (15th to early 16th)	2	1	3
Early post-medieval (16th)	10	10	20
Total vessels	30	20	50

Table 2 shows that although most of the earlier vessels were recovered from trench 1, the earliest possible vessel found on the site came from trench 3. A suggested date for the deposition of each context is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Suggested deposition date of pottery groups from stratified contexts

trench	context	date	sherds	vessels
1	100	16th to 17th	1	1
1	101	16th	4	4
1	106	12th to 16th	3	3
1	106/107	16th	7	6
1	110	15th to 16th	41	2
1	111	14th to 15th	8	7
1	117	12th	2	2
1	121	late 11th to mid 12th	6	1
1	122	12th to 13th	14	1
1	130	late 12th to 13th	2	2
1	136	12th to early/mid 13th	35	1
3	300	16th	7	7
3	323	late 15th to 16th	10	9
3	330	late 12th to 14th	4	2
3	332	mid 11th to 12th	1	1
3	336	10th to 12th	2	1

Saxo-Norman to early medieval

At least twelve vessels date to the period before the early/mid 13th century. All but one vessel (Thetford-type ware) definitely dates later than the last quarter of the 11th century. All of the Stamford ware vessels present are jugs or pitchers, probably intended for table use. Each of the five coarse ware vessels present is in a different fabric; no sources can be identified for these vessels

Medieval

Overall, 15 of the pottery vessels recovered from the site can be dated to the medieval period, between the late 12th and 15th centuries. The assemblage includes a jug from Nottingham together with Bourne-type, Toynton-type and Grimston-type vessels. Only the sherd from Nottingham is diagnostic of a specific date span (13th century). An unusual find is the drainpipe in a Toynton-type fabric from context 111. The pipe has an internal deposit that suggests that it was used horizontally, possibly in association with the salt making industry.

Late Medieval to Post-medieval

A limited range of mid 15th to 16th century pottery types was recovered from the site. All the ware types present have a long life span and few diagnostic features were present, however it is likely that the entire assemblage predates the mid 16th century. Included in the group is an almost complete unusually shaped bunghole jug in a Bourne-type ware? The bunghole has been decorated with a simple incuse stamp and the base is faceted.

Summary and Recommendations

This is a small but important assemblage of post-Roman pottery. The ceramic assemblage suggests that although there may be continuous occupation in the area there are two main peaks of activity, one in the 12th century and one in the early to mid 16th century. The 12th to 15th century pottery includes a wide range of local and regional fabric types most of which are as yet un-sourced. The presence of a small number of regional imports may reflect the importance of the site during the early part of the medieval period.

The assemblage should be kept for future study, especially as part of any characterisation of the fabrics for a type series. Five important vessels should be drawn for the archive record; these vessels are all from Trench 1 and have been listed as DR1-DR5 in the archive record.

Pottery Archive MLPB01

Jane Young *Lindsey Archaeological Services*

trench	context	cname	sub fabric	form type	sherds	vessels	decoration	part	action	ref no	description	date
1	100	RGRE		hollow	1	1		BS			int & ext reduced glaze;abraded	late 15th to early 17th
1	101	BOU		bowl	1	1		rim			unglaze	
1	101	BOU		jar/jug	1	1		BS			flake;cu speckled glaze	
1	101	NOTG	light firing	jug	1	1		BS			cu glaze	
1	101	TB		jug/jar	1	1		BS				
1	106	EMX	light firing;fine-med sandy;hard	hollow	1	1		BS			handmade ?;int soot at neck;comm fine-med quartz mod fe occ white clay & shell	
1	106	EMX	OX/R/OX;med shelly;hard	small jar	1	1		neck			wheelthrown;shell incl puncuated brachiopod;? Harold/SNEOT;thin walled;leached interior	
1	106	MEDLO	bright oxid;med sandy;hard	?	1	1		base			burnt;semi vitrified spots of glaze	
1	106/107	BOU		bunghole jug	2	1		BS		DR1	same vessel in context 110	
1	106/107	BOU		jug	1	1	neck cordon	BS			reduced fabric;burnt glaze	
1	106/107	LMLOC	OX/R/OX;med sandy;hard	large jug	1	1		handle			st Marks type grooved and pierced strap handle;reduced glaze;abraded;could be TOYII	

trench	context	cname	sub fabric	form type	sherds	vessels	decoration	part	action	ref no	description	date
1	106/107	LMLOC	OX/R/OX;very fine sandy;medium hard		1	1		base			similar to TB	
1	106/107	TB		jug ?	1	1		base			wear on edge of base;? Worn interior	
1	106/107	TB		jar/jug	1	1		BS			? Late med	
1	110	BOU		bunghole jug	40	1	incuse stamps on bung	profile	draw;resto	DR1	pierced ribbed strap handle;some of glaze is bubbled/burnt;faceted base;cu glaze over white slip with reduced run; ? Bourne manufacture	15th ?
1	110	DST		jug	1	1		BS			cu speckled glaze	
1	111	BOU		jug ?	1	1		BS			? Early or intrusive	
1	111	GRIMT		jug	1	1		BS				
1	111	MEDLO	OX/R/OX;med-coarse sandy;hard	jug ?	2	1		BS			? TOY	
1	111	MEDX	light firing;med-coarse sandy;hard	jug	1	1	multi horiz grooves	BS			amber glaze;mod fe comm quartz incl red stained	
1	111	TOY		bowl	1	1		rim			odd rim;? Boston	
1	111	TOY		drain	1	1		BS	draw;anal	DR5	yellow deposit on interior suggesting use	
1	111	TOY		small jug	1	1		rim			slightly cuffed rim;? Boston	
1	117	SLOOL		bowl	1	1	ribbed	rim	draw	DR2	thick ext soot	
1	117	ST	B	pitcher/jug	1	1		BS			glaze	
1	121	ST	B	collared pitcher	6	1	horizontal grooves	rim handle & BS			unglaze	

trench	context	cname	sub fabric	form type	sherds	vessels	decoration	part	action	ref no	description	date
1	122	SLSHC		jar	14	1		rim & BS	draw;resto	DR4	hollow everted rim;thick ext soot;part int soot;part leached int;? SLSt;whell thrown ?;salt deposits on ext?	
1	130	BOUA		jug	1	1	neck cordon	BS			leached interior; ? Baston type	
1	130	ST	B	jar/pitcher	1	1	horizontal grooves	BS			glaze	
1	136	SLQSO		jar	35	1	pressed rim	profile	draw;resto	DR3	handmade;soot ext;burnt carb dep interior of base;white water ? Deposit on int	
3	300	BOU		jug	1	1	applied thumbed strip	BS			burnt cu glaze	
3	300	BOU		bowl	1	1		rim			flanged rim	
3	300	BOU		bowl	1	1		rim			cu speckled glaze;everted rim	
3	300	BOU		jug	1	1		BS			cu glaze	
3	300	CIST		cup	1	1		base			odd restricted base	
3	300	MEDLO	OX/R/OX;fine sandy;hard	small vessel	1	1		base			pocked glaze underneath;common fine quartz + occ aggregate sandstone	
3	300	TB		jar/jug	1	1		base				
3	323	BOU		jug ?	2	1		BS				
3	323	BOU		jar ?	1	1		BS				
3	323	BOUA		jar	1	1		BS				
3	323	BOUA		jug ?	1	1		BS			glaze	
3	323	BOUA		jar	1	1		base			soot	

trench	context	cname	sub fabric	form type	sherds	vessels	decoration	part	action	ref no	description	date
3	323	BOUA		jar	1	1		base			soot	
3	323	CIST	brown fabric	cup	1	1		BS				
3	323	LMLOC	bright oxid;fine-med sandy;very hard	jar ?	1	1		BS			purple-green glaze;burnt/cracked in kiln	
3	323	TB		bowl	1	1		BS			part int soot	
3	330	BOUA		jar	2	1		rim & BS	drawable		unglaze	
3	330	ST	B	pitcher/jug	2	1		BS & handle			glaze	late 11th to mid 12th
3	332	ST	G/B	jar/pitcher	1	1		BS			glaze	
3	336	THETT	fabric T ?	jar ?	2	1		BS				

Milestone Lane, Pinchbeck – MLPB01

Environmental Archaeology Assessment

Introduction

Evaluation excavations conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology at Milestone Lane, Pinchbeck in advance of proposals for housing development uncovered elements of what were thought to be a medieval saltern of 11-13th century date. During the course of the evaluation a small collection of animal bone was recovered by hand and four soil samples were taken from features thought to be associated with salt production (Table 1).

Table 1: Samples submitted for environmental assessment

site	sample	context	volume in l.	description	date
MLPB01	1	145	10	Burnt layer within possible salt filtration unit	Med.
MLPB01	2	138	10	Burnt layer within possible salt filtration unit	Med.
MLPB01	3	330	5	Fill of ditch	?
MLPB01	4	136	8	Contents of intact pot associated with filtration unit	Med.

Methods

The soil samples were processed in the following manner. Sample volume and weight was measured prior to processing. The samples were washed in a 'Siraf' tank (Williams 1973) using a flotation sieve with a 0.5mm mesh and an internal wet-sieve of 1mm mesh for the residue. Both residue and float were dried and the residues subsequently re-floated to ensure the efficient recovery of charred material and mollusc shells. The dry volume of the flots was measured, and the volume and weight of the residue recorded.

The residue was sorted by eye, and environmental and archaeological finds picked out, noted on the assessment sheet and bagged independently. A magnet was run through each residue in order to recover magnetised material such as hammerscale and prill. The residue was then discarded. The float of each sample was studied under a low power binocular microscope. The presence of environmental finds (ie snails, charcoal, carbonised seeds, bones etc) was noted and their abundance and species diversity recorded on the assessment sheet. The float was then bagged. The float and finds from the sorted residue constitute the material archive of the samples.

The individual components of the samples were then preliminarily identified and the results are summarised below in Tables 2-4.

Results

All four samples had considerable numbers of modern rootlets within them. Two of the samples, 145 and 138, include waterlogged material that had survived while the other two included only charred plant remains with one or two uncharred contaminant seeds of *Chenopodium* sp. (orache/goosefoot) and *Sambucus* sp. (elder).

Table 2: Finds from the samples

sample	cont.	vol	residue vol in ml.	pot *	metal	fired earth wt g #	ham'r scale $	slag wt g.	glass	bone wt g.	marine shell wt g.	comment
1	145	10	0.15							2	<1	
2	138	10	0.25							10	2	Wooden point/peg
3	330	5	0.1	1/<1	Fe	1	+++	86		<1	2	Fe nail?, vitrified material and slag
4	136	8		6/7						2	<1	

(* sherd count/weight; # sorted from >7mm only;
$ frequency +=1-10 or present; ++=11-50; +++=51-150)

Both contexts 145 and 138 have been proposed as deriving from a saltern filtration unit. The samples are very similar in that they have no archaeological finds, except a small preserved wooden point in context 138, and both have some organic survival although the presence of degraded wood and only robust seeds indicates that much of the orginally deposited organic material may have been lost. The residue of both included compressed matted plant stems of possible straw or reed with quantities of wood charcoal. It does not appear that this organic component originates from peat and it seems more likely to be organic material collected and dumped into the feature. It may even be consistent with vegetation spread on the floor of a building. Both samples include a marsh mollusc fauna and other elements of aquatic origin and although the feature might have become waterlogged and been colonised the presence of burnt shells and valves of *Pisidium* perhaps indicates that these shells at least were introduced into the feature, possibly with the vegetation. The terrestrial snails indicate grassland, with an abundance of *Pupilla muscorum*, perhaps suggesting some ground disturbance or bare earth. The few fragments of bone, burnt fish bone, bird eggshell, cockle and mussel shell, and charred barley, wheat and oat grains indicates that the deposits were receiving some domestic rubbish.

There is nothing in these samples that would support an interpretation that the feature was a filtration tank for salt production, but such a feature might be filled in with other rubbish when it ceased to function.

Context 330, a possible flood deposit within a ditch, produced the only evidence for industrial activity on the site in the form of iron smithing slag (Cowgill pers comm.) and quantities of flake hammerscale (Table 2). Charcoal was present in only small quantities and domestic rubbish was reflected in the occurrence of charred barley?, wheat and oat, bird eggshell, cockle and mussel shell fragments and an eel vertebra. A strong marsh element in the snail fauna probably reflects the ditch environment in which the deposit formed.

Finally context 136 taken from within a complete pot and associated with the feature from which samples 1 and 2 were taken produced an assemblage generally typical of domestic waste. Charred grain, a little animal bone, burnt eel and other small fish bones, bird eggshell, a little charcoal and pottery were all recovered from the sample (Tables 2 and 3).

Table 3: Environmental finds from the samples

samp	cont	flot vol in ml.	char coal *	char'd grain *	char'd seed *	egg-shell wt. g	fish *	snail */#	
1	145	50£	5	1	1	1	1	3	Barley, cf spelt, oat, Poaceae, straw?, *Sambucus*, *Rumex*, *Urtica*, *Carex*, *Fumaria*, wood, moss, leaf, cockle, bird, small fish, caddis
2	138	100£	4	1	1	1	1	2	Barley, straw?, *Rumex*, *Polygonum*, *Urtica*, *Sambucus*, Poaceae, *Medicago/Trifolium*, moss, leaf, wood, mussel, bird, small fish, *Daphnia* sp.
3	330	6	2	2	1	<1	1	2	Barley?, wheat, oat, mussel, cockle, *Chara* sp., Poaceae, *Galium*, frog/toad, eel
4	136		3	2	1	1	2	3	Barley, cf spelt, oat, *Sambucus*, *Urtica*, mussel, eel, small fish

* frequency 1=1-10; 2=11-50; 3=51-150; 4=151-250; 5=>250 items; # diversity 1=1-3; 2=4-10; 3=11-25 taxa
+ particularly abundant taxa relative to other shells; £ waterlogged material in flot

The snail assemblage includes both terrestrial grassland taxa and aquatic or marsh habitat species. The association of *Vallonia pulchella* and *Vallonia costata* in the same sample (Table 4), a unlikely occurrence in nature, suggests that these two assemblages have been artifically combined, probably through the introduction of the marsh/aquatic fauna to the context with vegetation collected from fen or marsh habitats.

Table 4: Terrestrial and freshwater mollusca from the samples

Sample	1	2	3	4
Context	145	138	330	136
Open country				
Cecilioides acicula	+		+	
Vertigo pygmaea	+*	+		+
Vertigo sp.		+*		
Pupilla muscorum	+	+	+	+
Vallonia costata				+
Vallonia excentrica	?			+*
Vallonia pulchella	?			+
Vallonia sp.	+	+	+	
Catholic				
Cochlicopa lubrica	+			+
Cochlicopa sp.	+	+	+	
Shade or marsh				
Punctum pygmaeum		+		+
Nesovitre hammonis	+*			
Marsh and aquatic				
Vertigo antivertigo	+			
Vertigo angustior			+	+
Carychium sp.		+		+
Succinea sp.	+	+	+	+
Lymnaea truncatula	+	+	+	+*
Planorbis leucostoma	+		+	+
Planorbis planorbis	+		+	+
Bithynia tentaculata				?
Valvata macrostoma			+	
Pisidium sp.	+	+		+*

habitat groupings broadly taken from Evans, 1972; Macan 1977; Ellis 1969; Cameron and Redfern 1976; * – some shells burnt

Animal Bone

A small collection of animal bones, 20 fragments, was recovered during the evaluation. These bones have been identified and recorded following the procedures of the Environmental Archaeology Consultancy (see attached Key) and the catalogue is attached to this report.

All the matreial was in a good state of preservation although two bones show evidence of dog gnawing and five had been visibly butchered. The fragments included bones of cattle, horse, sheep or goat, pig and dog. Context 111 included three bones of horse which were largely intact suggesting that they derived from burials, although a metatarsus carried cut marks on the shaft - possibly associated with skinning.

Discussion

There is no supporting environmental evidence for the sampled features being related to saltern activity. Most of the deposits contain domestic refuse and the only industrial evidence relates to iron smithing. There are no marine or estuarine gastropods such as *Hydrobia ulvae* or *Hydrobia ventrosa* that might indicate the processing of saline rich sediments. The freshwater snail faunas, some shells of which are burnt, imply the introduction of material from marsh of fen environments although for what purpose cannot be addressed on the evidence from the evaluation although flooring material is clearly an option. The evidence appears more an indication of habitation and domestic activity than salt making although this would require further fieldwork for conclusive interpretation.

The environmental evidence indicates the local consumption of beef, mutton, pork, cockles and mussels, eel and other small fish, barley, wheat and possibly oats. Dogs and horses were kept at the site and there was local access to freshwater resources and possible fen environments. The presence of an abundance of charcoal in all the samples suggests that wood was used as a fuel rather than peat, although straw, grass or reed stems are also present in the charred assemblage.

Recommendations

The preservation of uncharred organic remains of medieval date in such a situation is unusual, and the occurrence of the wooden point and other readily identifiable plant remains makes this an unusual site. Detailed identification and analysis of the organic remains in the deposits is likely to considerably assist in the interpretation of the deposits and their possible origin and function. Iron smithing is clearly being carried out nearby and the site may hold more direct evidence for this craft industry. The charred cereal remains, burnt and unburnt bones and marine shellfish afford a small assemblage that reflects the local diet and the extent of marine exploitation of both fish and shellfish at the site.

Should further excavation be required at the the site then the quality of this evidence indicates that sampling should be undertaken to address all these points. Any future programme of work should ensure that bulk samples (generally 20-30 litres in size in lidded 10 litre plastic tubs) are collected from a series of dateable deposits and that all the animal bones are recovered during excavation. Sampling should target any possible features associated with the iron-smithing such as hearths, and a range of other features, but should also include large build-ups of silty sand that might derive from saltern activities. Samples should be processed specifically with the recovery of evidence for industrial activities as well as environmental remains in mind.

If mitigation establishes that no further field work is required then the only further work that might be considered is the identification of the organic remains within the matted and compressed residue of contexts 145 and 138 and the specific identification of the fish remains in the samples.

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Archive Catalogue of animal bone from Pinchbeck – MLPB01

site	cont.	species	bone	no.	side	fusion	zone	butchery	gnawing	toothwear	measurement	path	comment	preservation
MLPB01	111	SUS	MAN	1	L		23			J7K3			ANT RAMUS WITH DEC PREMOLAR ALVEOLI	4
MLPB01	111	BOS	PH1	1	L	PF	12						DISTAL DAMAGED-PROB CHARRED	4
MLPB01	111	CAN	TIB	1	R	PFDF	14						BOTH ENDS DAMAGED-GRACILE	4
MLPB01	111	BOS	SCP	1	L	DF	123	CH					GLENOID AND NECK-CHOPPED THRU GLENOID	4
MLPB01	111	BOS	RAD	1	R	PJ	13						PROX END AND SHAFT-CALF-EPI JUST FUSING	4
MLPB01	111	BOS	RAD	1	R		6	CH					DISTAL SHAFT-CHOPPED MIDSHAFT	4
MLPB01	111	BOS	FEM	1	R	DN	4	CH					DISTAL SHAFT-EPI CHOPPED OFF	4
MLPB01	111	EQU	TIB	1	R	DF	4567				SD-38 Bd-72.2 Dd-45.4		SHAFT AND DISTAL END	4
MLPB01	111	EQU	TIB	1	L	PFDF	1234567		DG		GL-330 SD-35.1 Bd-69 Dd-39.8		PROX END DAMAGED	4
MLPB01	111	EQU	MTT	1	R	DF	123	KN			GL-283.5 Bp-52.5 Dp-48.8 SD-29.8 Bd-50 Dd-37		COMPLETE-CUT MARKS ON SHAFT	4
MLPB01	115	BOS	CQ	1	F		1		DG				LARGE-CHEWED	4
MLPB01	323	SUS	MAN	1	R		2			fgh11I7			DECIDUOUS TOOTH ROW	4
MLPB01	323	CSZ	RIB	1	F								SHAFT FRAGMENT	4
MLPB01	323	OVCA	TIB	1	R	PN	4						PROX SHAFT	4
MLPB01	323	CSZ	UNI	1	F								INDET	4
MLPB01	323	BOS	INN	1	R		9	CH					POST FRAGMENT OF ILIUM-CHOPPED THRU ACETABULUM	4
MLPB01	323	CSZ	UNI	1	F								INDET	4
MLPB01	325	EQU	LMV	1	F	CN							POST LUMBAR VERT-WING FRAGMENT	4
MLPB01	330	CSZ	LMV	1	F								TRANSVERSE PROCESS	4
MLPB01	330	BOS	ULN	1	R		3						SHAFT AND DISTAL END OF PROX ARTIC	4

Appendix 4 List of archaeological contexts

Context	Description
Trench 1	
100	Ploughsoil
101	Subsoil
102	Salt making: hearth cut?
103	Ditch cut
104	Pit cut
105	Ditch cut
106	Dumped deposit (?)
107	Dumped deposit (?)
108	Fill of [105]
109	Fill of [105]
110	Fill of [105]
111	Fill of [105]
112	Fill of [105]
113	Fill of [105]
114	Fill of [105]
115	Fill of [105]
116	Fill of [105]
117	Fill of [105]
118	Saltmaking deposit
119	Saltmaking deposit
120	Saltmaking deposit
121	Tip line to stabilise silt mound
122	Fill of [104]
123	Fill of [104]
124	Fill of [104]
125	Fill of [127]
126	Fill of [127]
127	Pit cut
128	Fill of [103]
129	Fill of [103]
130	Saltmaking deposit
131	Fill of [102]
132	Fill of [102]
133	Fill of [102]
134	Fill of [102]
135	Fill of [102]
136	Fill of [102]
137	Fill of [102]
138	Fill of [102]
139	Fill of [102]
140	Fill of [102]
141	Fill of [102]
142	Fill of [102]
143	Fill of [102]
144	Fill of [102]
145	Fill of [102]
146	Fill of [102]
147	Saltmaking deposit
148	Ditch cut?
149	Fill of [148]
150	Saltmaking deposit
151	Saltmaking deposit
152	Alluvium/silt mound

Context	Description
Trench 2	
200	Ploughsoil
201	Subsoil
202	Fill of [208]
203	Fill of [209]
204	Ditch cut
205	Ditch cut
206	Fill of [204]
207	Fill of [205]
208	Ditch cut
209	Ditch cut
Trench 3	
300	Ploughsoil
301	Post hole cut
302	Natural feature?
303	Ditch cut
304	Ditch cut
305	Ditch cut
306	Ditch cut
307	Ditch cut
308	Pit cut
309	Former boundary hedge
310	Ditch cut
311	Post hole cut
312	Pit cut
313	Gully cut
314	Ditch cut
315	Fill of [309]
316	Fill of [307]
317	Subsoil
318	Subsoil
319	Rubble deposit
320	Rubble/brick dust deposit
321	Fill of [305]
322	Fill of [308]
323	Subsoil
324	Alluvial/flood deposit
325	Alluvial/flood deposit
326	Alluvium
327	Fill of [310]
328	Flood deposit, fill of [302], [303], [304]
329	Fill of [313]
330	Fill of [306]
331	Fill of [306]
332	Alluvium
333	Fill of [301]
334	Demolition deposit?
335	Fill of [311]
336	Fill of [312]
337	Alluvium
338	Alluvium
339	Post hole cut
340	Fill of [339]