



Results of an Archaeological Watching Brief
off White House Lane, Fishtoft, Boston, Lincolnshire
LEALAND PARK DEVELOPMENT
(Planning Application Reference: B09/0531/97)

NGR TF 345 428

prepared by

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on behalf of

Broadgate Builders (Spalding) Ltd.
Broadgate House
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Site Code: WHL97
Acc. No: LCNCC 43.97

JSAC 297/02/03

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**Results of an Archaeological Watching Brief on land off
White House Lane, Fishtoft, Lincolnshire
LEALAND PARK DEVELOPMENT**

Event L18575
Source L18317
L18316
Mon 483408
FS) 13636
L183409
Crd) 13637
Med L183410
13638
R0 L183411
13639

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Summary

Broadgate Builders (Spalding) Ltd. were granted full planning permission with conditions, by Boston District Council for residential accommodation on 8.1ha of land off White House Lane, Fishtoft, Lincolnshire (LEALAND PARK). A condition of the permission stated that an archaeological watching brief be maintained during development. Discussions with the Boston Community Archaeologist concluded that two areas of the development site should be subjected to an archaeological watching brief which was to be maintained during groundworks associated with the development (known as Areas A and B).

The archaeological watching brief recorded the presence of four pits, two of which are undated. The remaining two contained medieval and Roman pottery respectively. The pit containing Roman material was recorded cutting through alluvium and was sealed by subsoil. The medieval pit was recorded cutting through the subsoil and sealed by topsoil.

Subsoil was not present across the whole of the areas monitored and it is considered likely that where subsoil does exist, these may have formed silt 'islands' on slightly higher and drier land during the medieval period. Such islands would have been suitable for industrial activities like salt processing. However, no such evidence was encountered, although burnt clay fragments were retrieved. The presence of burnt clay on the site would suggest that settlement was present nearby.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Site location and description

1.1.1 The site is located approximately 2km west of Fishtoft on the southeastern outskirts of Boston centred on NGR TF 345 428(see Figure 1). White House Lane forms part of the eastern boundary of the site and Fishtoft Road the southern. Recent housing development surrounds the remainder of the site along with pastoral land. The site is level and lies at a height of approximately 2-3m AOD. The site had in recent years been arable land with nursery buildings in the southeast corner.

1.1.2 The site lies within an area which is currently unmapped geologically although soils adjacent to the site are Tanvets Association (811e) comprising deep stoneless calcareous coarse silty soils overlying marine alluvium (SSEW 1983). The earliest deposit encountered during the watching brief has comprised alluvium, which confirms the geology currently mapped.

1.2 Planning background

1.2.1 The site had been subject to an earlier field evaluation as part of a outline planning application (B09/0531/96). This comprised fieldwalking, geophysical survey and trial trench evaluation. As a result of this fieldwork two distinct areas were identified by the Boston Community Archaeologist to be subjected to archaeological monitoring (watching brief). Observation and recording were to be undertaken within Area A and Area B was identified as being an area to be subjected to an 'intensive watching brief'.

1.2.2 This report is based on the requirements of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 : Archaeology and Planning* (DoE, 1990). The watching brief was carried out in accordance with current best archaeological practice and the appropriate national and regional standards and guidelines, including:

Archaeology Handbook (Lincolnshire County Council 1998);
Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1994; rev. 1999); and
Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage, 1991).

1.2.3 The watching brief was undertaken between by members of JSAC staff. This report was written and compiled by Jenny Young BA (Hons), MA, AIFA in consultation with Dan Slatcher BA, MA, MIFA.

2.0 Objectives

2.1 The overall objective of the watching brief was to monitor all ground disturbance during the course of the development, in order to establish whether any archaeological deposits survive within the site; and to ensure their preservation by record where they may not be left in situ. This may require limited excavation in order to define the date, extent and importance of any such remains.

2.2 An archaeological watching brief has been defined as a programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons within a specified area or site...where there is the possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed

or destroyed. The programme will result in the preparation of a report and ordered archive (IFA, 1994).

3.0 Archaeological background

- 3.1 No prehistoric finds have been found in the immediate vicinity although a worked flint was picked up during fieldwalking of a site to the north (Palmer-Brown 1995). Roman remains have been recorded 100m to the south of the site at Fogarty's factory and during archaeological evaluation to the north (Palmer-Brown 1995).
- 3.2 Boston has been a port town since the 7th-8th centuries AD (Mid Saxon Period) and continued to thrive in the medieval period. Evaluation and excavations to the north of the site have recorded a 9th-10th century Saxon settlement (Palmer-Brown 1995). An evaluation recently undertaken to the immediate west and adjacent to the site, recorded a presence in the late Saxon period (Crossley 2002) and represented by a pit and ditches.
- 3.3 The placename Fishtoft derives from the Old Danish '*toft*' meaning 'the messuage, curtilage' with the fish element of an unknown origin. It is likely that this relates to industry in the environs. At the time of the Domesday Survey of 1086AD, Fishtoft is referred to as 'Toft'. Guy of Craon and Count Alan are listed as holders of land with 18 freemen, 9 villagers, 1 smallholder, a church, a priest, and 80 acres of meadow within the hundred. The earliest written reference to the placename Fishtoft occurs in 1416 on a stone in the parish church (Cameron 1998, p. 44).

4.0 Results (see Figure 2 for development plan and location of archaeological features)

4.1 Area A (Observation and recording)

- 4.1.1 Groundworks in this area involved the stripping of topsoil for the access road and the excavation of trenches for drainage and house footings. Excavation for house footings varied from plot to plot depending on ground conditions but were excavated to a maximum depth of 1.1m below the present ground surface. Ceramic field drains were encountered across this area.
- 4.1.2 Topsoil comprising a dark brown sandy silt was recorded to a depth of 0.30m below the present ground surface. This sealed a layer of orange brown laminated silt subsoil (see Plate 1), which varied in thickness (up to 0.6m in depth) and was not present across all of Area A. During excavation of Plot 162, the subsoil sealed a 0.1m thick layer of light grey clayey silt. An orange-brown silt extended beyond the depth of excavation.
- 4.1.3 Elsewhere across Area A, the subsoil sealed orange-brown alluvium. During excavation of Plots 115-6, 129-30, 133-4, 136-7, 165 no subsoil was encountered.

4.2 Area B (Intensive Observation and Recording)

- 4.2.1 Groundworks associated with development within Area B (intensive observation and recording) included topsoil stripping for the roadway and the excavation of trenches for drainage and house footings.
- 4.2.2 Across Area B, the deposits encountered have generally comprised a layer of topsoil (approx. 0.30m deep) overlying a 0.4m thick layer of mid-brown sandy silt subsoil. The build up of subsoil is likely to be attributed to periods of flooding whereby silts were deposited.

- 4.2.3 Subsoil was not encountered during excavation for plots 12-13, 17-18, 24-5. Below the subsoil (where encountered), alluvium has been recorded and extends further than the limit of excavation. The footings have in general been excavated to a width of 0.8m and a maximum depth of 1m below the current ground surface.
- 4.2.4 Human activity in this area is represented by modern and early remains. During excavation of Plot 2, brick foundations of the Halfway House Public House were encountered and a brick built, concrete lined sluice pit was encountered during groundworks for Plot 5 (see Figure 3). Ceramic drains were recorded across the site.
- 4.2.5 Within Area B, archaeological remains were recorded during excavations for house plots 1, 6, 152 and 156. An unstratified 14th-16th century sherd of Toynton/Bolingbroke ware was retrieved during excavation of Plot 154 (Appendix A). The remainder of the houseplots and roadways did not reveal any archaeological deposits or artefacts.
- 4.2.6 The pit recorded during excavation of the footings for Plot 1 contained three fills (see Plate 2). The primary fill comprised a light grey coarse silt (105c) which was sealed by a layer of decayed fired clay with lenses of charcoal present (105b). This deposit contained 12th-13th century medieval pottery (see Appendix A). The fired clay is thought to derive from a domestic source (see Appendix B). This was sealed by a mid grey brown homogenous silt with rare inclusions of fired silt (105a).
- 4.2.7 A shallow pit (0.12m deep x 1.26m wide x 0.8m long) was recorded cutting through the natural geological clays during excavation of Plot 6 (see Figure 4). The primary fill of this feature (A1) comprised a dark brown coarse silty clay with charcoal. The upper fill (A2) was an orange brown silty clay with charcoal inclusions. No dateable material was recovered.
- 4.2.8 A third pit was recorded during the excavation of foundations for Plot 152 (see Plate 3). This pit was recorded at the base of the footings to a depth of 0.75m below the present ground surface. The fill of this feature comprised a mid reddish brown silty clay with occasional burnt clay and charcoal inclusions. No dating material was encountered.
- 4.2.9 A large pit with concave sides and a flat base was encountered during excavations for Plot 156 (see Figure 5). This feature cut through the alluvium. The primary fill of this feature (102) contained Roman pottery, bone and burnt clay. The Roman pottery from this pit suggests a deposition in the late-very late 4th century AD and indicates the presence of a site some status in the vicinity (see Appendix C). The burnt clay from this deposit is likely to derive from a hearth or oven (Appendix B). One piece of animal bone has been identified as cow and the other is unidentifiable (see Appendix D). This was sealed by a layer of subsoil (101), which contained three fragments of Roman greyware dated to the late 3rd Century.

5.0 Discussion

- 5.1 The archaeological watching brief has largely been negative. Modern disturbance was recorded in the southeastern corner where buildings had once stood. The only archaeological evidence present were four pits and are generally located towards the southeastern corner of the development site within Area B.
- 5.2 Two of the pits remain undated, with the remaining two producing medieval and Roman pottery. The pit containing Roman pottery was sealed by subsoil and suggests a build up of deposits during the post-Roman period. The build up of subsoil is likely to be attributed to periods of flooding whereby silts were deposited. This is further accentuated by the presence of third century Roman pottery present in the subsoil.
- 5.3 The construction of the Sea Bank during the medieval period would have prevented periodic flooding and reclaimed land located immediately to the north and behind it. This would have provided land suitable for agricultural or industrial (salt-processing) activities. The dearth of evidence for settlement during this period (bar one pit containing 12th-13th century pottery) would also confirm that this is the case.
- 5.4 In conclusion, the watching brief confirms the results of the geophysical survey and trial trench evaluation undertaken in 1997 (*JSAC 208/97/002*). However, consideration should also be made of the topography of such sites when defining areas of likely activity. Within this area of Fishtoft parish, slight deviations in the topography (i.e. centimetres) appear to be important with archaeological remains being present on the slightly higher ground.

6.0 Figures

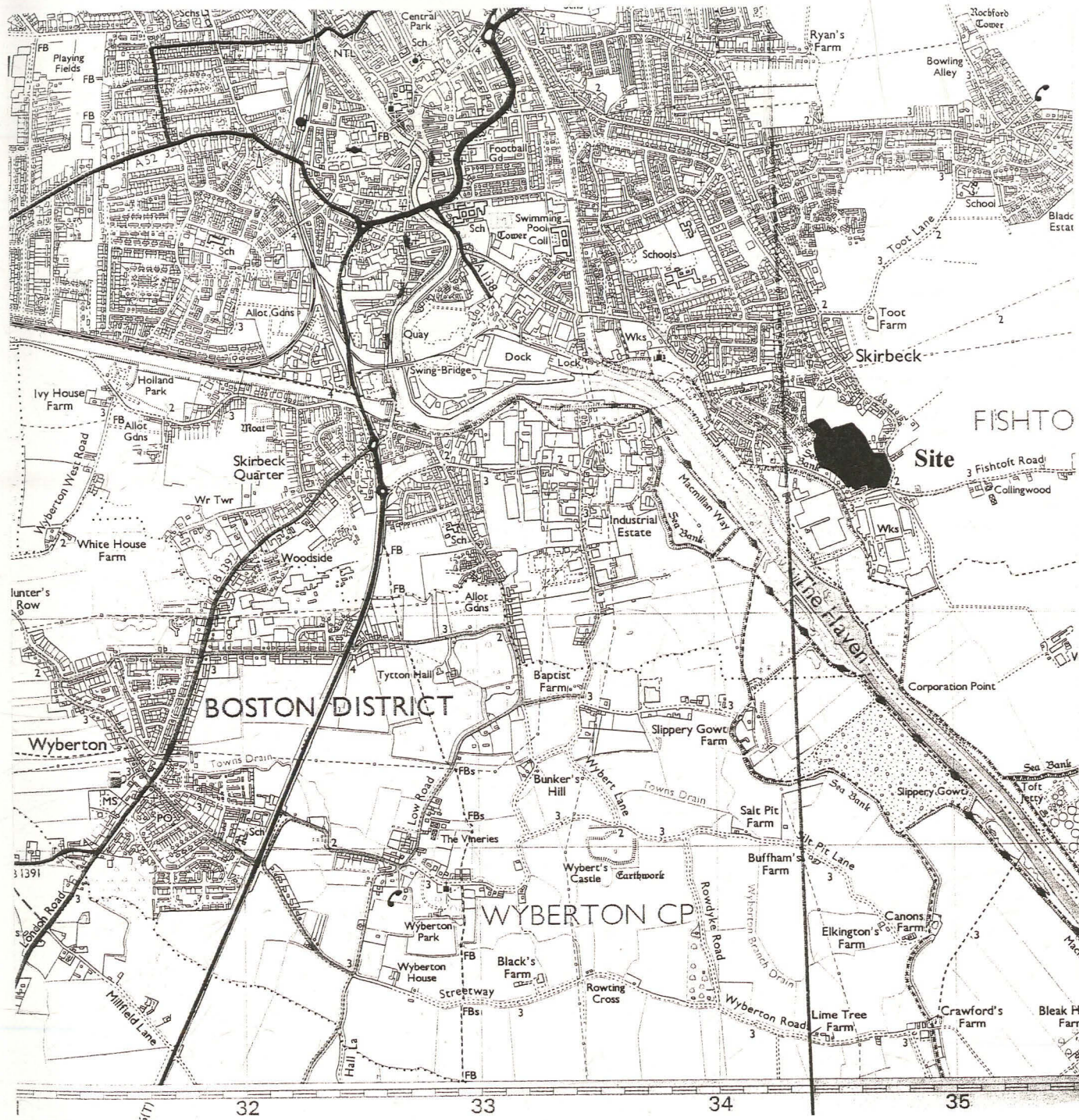
Figure 1. Site location plan

Figure 2. Development plan illustrating location of archaeological features and areas monitored

Figure 3. Section through sluice pit encountered during excavation for Plot 5

Figure 4. Section drawing of pit recorded during excavation for Plot 6

Figure 5. Section through the Roman pit recorded in Plot 156



Note: Map based on Ordnance Survey with the sanction of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office, Crown Copyright Reserved. Licence No. AL 100020447

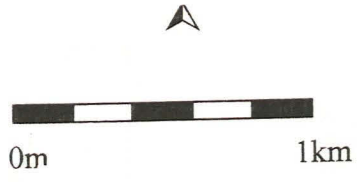
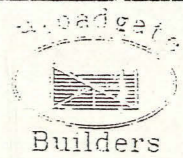


Figure 1. Site location



Figure 2. Development plan illustrating location of archaeological features and areas monitored



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PROJECT TITLE
PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OFF FISHPOUND ROAD AND WHITE HOUSE LANE, BOSTON, LINCOLNSHIRE.

DRAWING
SITE LAYOUT

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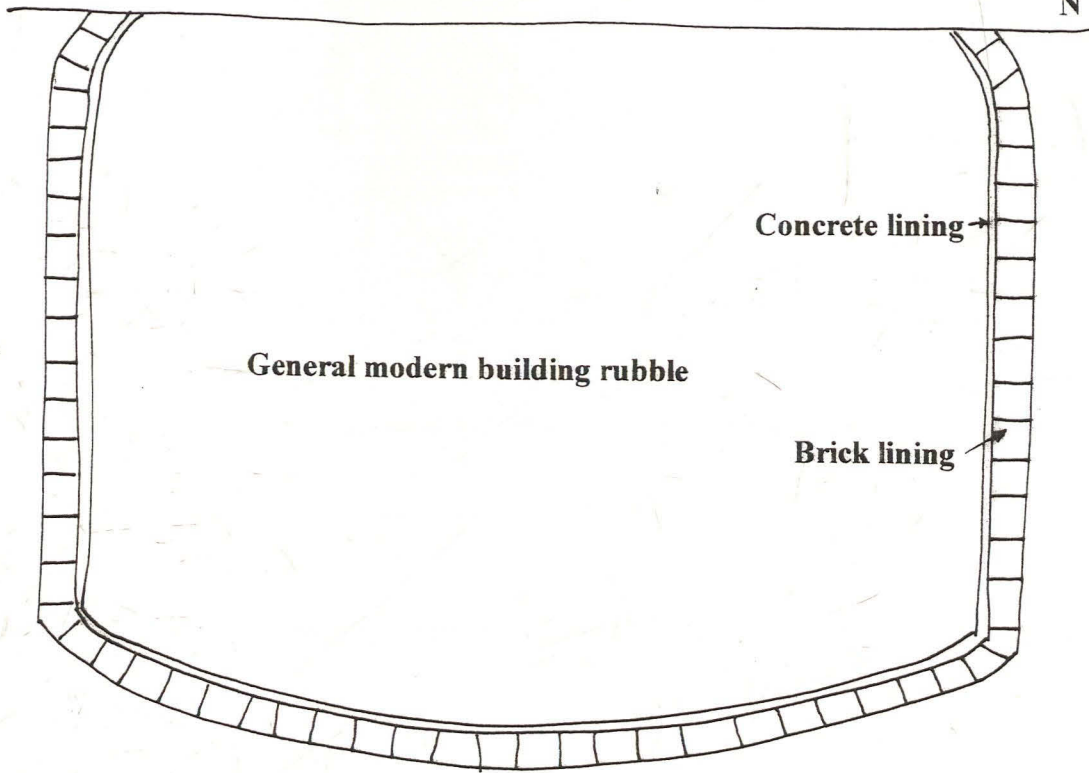


Figure 3. Section through sluice pit encountered during excavation for Plot 5

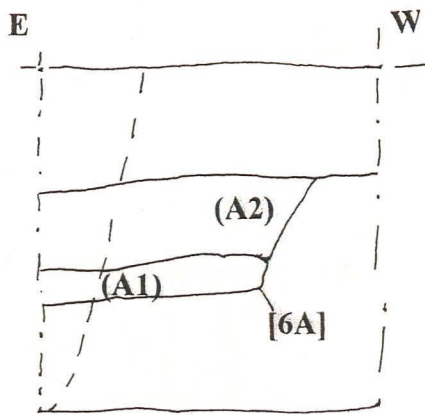


Figure 4. Section drawing of pit recorded during excavation for Plot 6

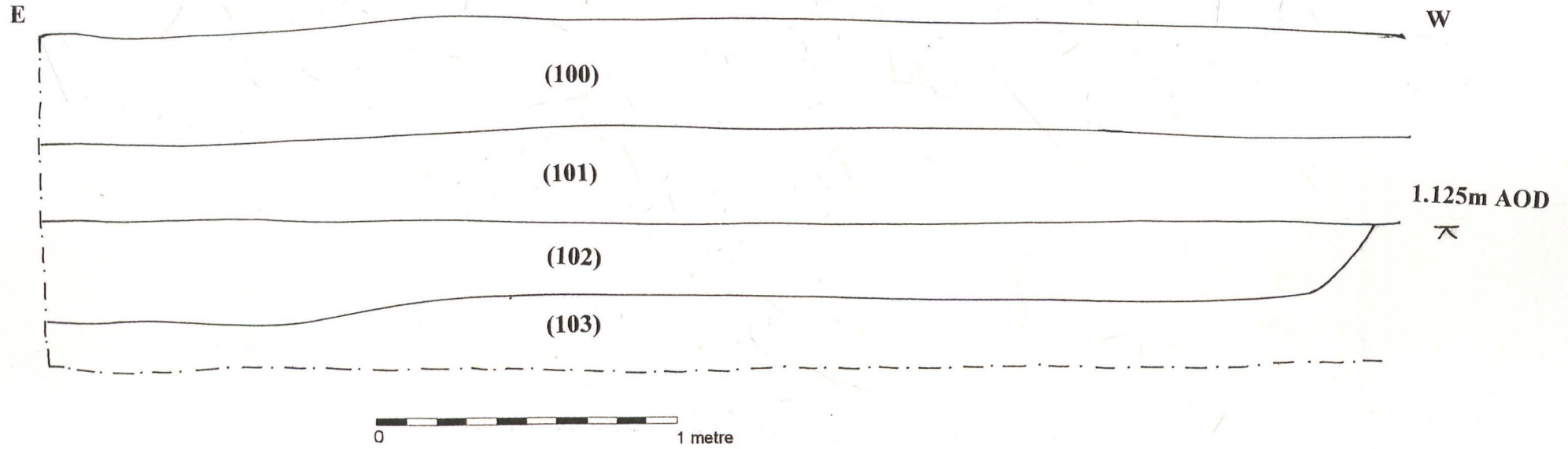


Figure 5. Section through the Roman pit recorded in Plot 156

7.0 Plates

Plate 1. Plot 166 illustrating the general soil profile

Plate 2. The pit encountered during excavations for Plot 1

Plate 3. The pit encountered during excavation for Plot 152



Plate 1. Plot 166 illustrating general soil profile



Plate 2. The pit encountered during excavations for Plot 1



Plate 3. The pit encountered during excavation for Plot 152

8.0 Bibliography

- CAMERON, K., 1998. *A Dictionary of Lincolnshire Place-Names*. Nottingham: The English Place-Name Society.
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**APPENDIX A:
POTTERY ARCHIVE
JANE YOUNG, LAS**

Pottery Archive WHL97

Jane Young Lindsey Archaeological Services

trench	context	cname	full name	sub fabric	form type	vessels	sherds	weight	decoration	part	action	description	date
plot 1	105b	EMHM	Early Medieval Handmade ware		jar	1	1	6		BS		soot	12th to mid 13th
plot 1	105b	EMHM	Early Medieval Handmade ware		jar	1	1	14		rim			12th to mid 13th
plot 1	105b	EMHM	Early Medieval Handmade ware		jar	1	1	57		rim			12th to mid 13th
plot 1	105b	EMX	Non-local Early Medieval fabrics	bright OX/R/OX; fine-med sandy; hard	small jug	1	1	49		base		abundant fine-med subround quartz occ larger rounded mod fe;? Grimston	late 12th to mid 13th
plot 1	105b	LSW1	12th century Lincoln Glazed ware		jug	1	1	6	applied fe scales	BS	LAS fabric type series	? ID as light firing; cu specks in glaze	early to early/mid 13th
plot 1	105b	LSW1	12th century Lincoln Glazed ware		jug	1	6	518	vertical applied pressed striips	base & BS		? Id as quartz a little fine but otherwise looks like Lincoln; plain sharp angled flat base	mid/late 12th to early/mid 13th century
plot 154		TB	Toynton/Bolingbroke wares		bowl	1	1	11		rim		abraded; simple slightly everted rim	14th to 16th

**APPENDIX B:
FIRED CLAY ASSEMBLAGE
JANE COWGILL**

The fired clay assemblage from White House Lane, Fishtoft, Lincolnshire, (WHL 97; LCNCC: 43.97).

Context 102, Fired clay, count 19, weight 188g.

Low oxidised-fired clayey silt with a high iron content, no added temper, the organic inclusions are all natural. Two pieces have a flat surface and on one two surfaces meet at a right angle. Mud brick? -but very low fired. One small piece has a pink/mauve coloration due to the presence of salt but these are not briquetage fragments. The pieces are probably from a hearth or oven.

Context 105, Fired clay, count 8, weight 110g

Fired clayey silt with some chalk inclusions, possibly also some added organic temper. Two flat buff-coloured surfaces. These pieces derive from a different source, again probably domestic, to those from context 102.

Jane Cowgill©
October 2002

**APPENDIX C:
POTTERY ARCHIVE
BARBARA PRECIOUS**

The Roman pottery from Fishtoft, nr Boston, Lincs (WHL97) for JSAC

B J Precious

30/10/02

The Roman Pottery

The pottery has been recorded according to the Study Group for Roman Pottery (SGRP) guidelines, using codes currently in use by the City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit (CLAU), and sherd count and weight as measures. See also the site archive (whl97.xls) and an expansion of the codes used (whlcodes.xls).

The site produced a small assemblage of pottery, 39 sherds weighing 595 grams, came from two contexts, 101 and 102. Context 101 produced three sherds of grey ware, one of which has a burnished exterior similar to fabrics produced at the Swanpool kilns near Lincoln. This factor, together with the presence of a sherd with burnished diagonal lines, suggests a date of at least the late 3rd century. The bulk of the material came from Context 102, 36 sherds, and is securely dated to the late to very late 4th century by the presence of an inturned bead and flange bowl in grey ware (GREY, BIBF), and a jar with double lid-seating in a local grey ware with very coarse inclusions (LCOA, JDLS).

Condition

The average sherd weight is 15 grams, which reflects the mainly medium size of the excavated sherds. Most of the sherds excavated are in good condition with little abrasion. Several of the vessels are either burnt or sooted on the exterior, suggesting use as cooking pots. However, two vessels have been burnt of the broken edge, indicative of destruction. One vessel is heavily encrusted on the exterior, probably as a result of deposition processes.

Statement of Potential

Although the assemblage is small the group is of value for two reasons. One is the location of the site near Boston; the other is the very late date of the assemblage. Despite the location, the assemblage would not be out of place in a late Roman group from the City of Lincoln, including the presence of Swanpool fabrics. The presence of fine wares from the Nene Valley and Oxfordshire kilns suggests a site of some status. However, the bulk of the assemblage consists of cooking vessels including the profile of a cheese-press in grey ware (GREY, CHP).

Four vessels have been selected for drawing to reflect both the very late Roman date of the assemblage (Drawings 1-3), and for intrinsic value (Drawing 4, the cheese-press).

Storage and Curation

The pottery should be retained for further study.

Fabric code Expansion

GREY	Miscellaneous local, grey, sandy wares
GYBN	As above with brown surfaces
LCOA	Local grey wares with very coarse inclusions
NVCC	Nene Valley colour-coated ware
OXRC	Oxfordshire red colour-coated ware
SHEL	Miscellaneous shell-tempered wares
SPOX	Swanpool oxidised ware
VESIC	Reduced wares with vesicular surfaces
ZDATE	Date range
ZZZ	Context comments

Form code Expansion

BK	Beaker
JBK	Jar or beaker
J	Jar
JB	Jar or bowl
JDLS	Jar with double lid-seating
CLSD	Miscellaneous closed forms
CHP	Cheese press
B	Bowl
B38	Bowl as Dragendorff form 38
BFB	Bead and flanged bowl
BIBF	Inturned bead and flange bowl

Decoration Expansion

B	Burnished zone
BDL	Burnished diagonal lines
BWL	Burnished wavy lines
PD	Painted dots
ROUJ	Juddered rouletting
Alteration	Expansion
ABR	Abraded
BURNT	Burnt
BURNTE	Burnt edge
ENCRUST	Encrustation
SOOTEX	Sooted exterior

Comments

Context	Fabric	Form	Dec	No Vess	Dwg No	Alter	Comments	Join	Sherds	Weight	Plot
101	GREY	JB	B				BS CF SWANPOOL		1	39	156
101	GREY	CLSD				ABR	BASE		1	8	156
101	GREY	J	BDL				BS		1	3	156
101	ZDATE						L3C+				156
101	ZZZ						MEDIUM SIZED SHERDS				156
102	LCOA	JDLS				D1	RIM NECK		1	17	156
102	GREY	BIBF				D2	RIM GIRTH		1	56	156
102	LCOA	BFB				D3	RIM GIRTH		2	24	156
102	GREY	CHP				D4	BASE BS PIERCED PRE COCT;PROF		2	60	156
102	SPOX	CLSD					BS		1	25	156
102	NVCC	BK		1			BASES J LFAB		2	14	156
102	NVCC	B	PD			BURNT	FTM; WHT FAB; WHT PA ON INTERIOR		1	35	156
102	GREY	JBK					BS		1	4	156
102	GREY	CLSD					BSS		6	48	156
102	LCOA	CLSD		1			BSS		3	34	156
102	GREY	J	ROUJ				BS		1	9	156
102	GREY	CLSD	B				BSS BODY GROOVES		3	23	156
102	GREY	CLSD	B;ROUJ				BS		1	17	156
102	GREY	CLSD	BWL?			ENCRUST	BS		1	60	156
102	GYBN	CLSD					BSS		2	13	156
102	GREY	CLSD				BURNT	BS		1	6	156
102	LCOA	CLSD				BURNT	BASE		1	10	156
102	VESIC	CLSD		1		BURNT	BSS		2	6	156
102	VESIC	CLSD				ABR	BS ;SHE?		1	6	156
102	SHEL	CLSD				SOOTEX	BS V HEAVY SOOTING; SSMH?		1	5	156
102	OXRC	B38?		1			FTM BS		2	73	156
102	ZZZ						SMALL TO MEDIUM SHERDS				156
102	ZDATE						ML4C				156

**APPENDIX D:
ANIMAL BONE**

01/11/02

The Environmental Archaeology Consultancy – EAC 54/02

Archive Catalogue of hand collected animal bone from Whitehouse Lane, Fishtoft – WHL97 – Plot 156

site	context	species	bone	no.	side	fusion	zone	butchery	gnawing	toothwear	path	comment	preservation
WHL97	102	BOS	HUM	1	L	DF	8					CONDYLE FRAGMENT - PLOT 156	3
WHL97	102	UNI	UNI	1	F							INDET- PLOT 156	4