

LAND AT ALBERT STREET, HOLBEACH,
LINCOLNSHIRE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



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HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

Report No. 1225

LAND AT ALBERT STREET, HOLBEACH, LINCOLNSHIRE AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Parish: Holbeach
Site Code: HAT 667
NGR: TF 3596 2475
TF 3597 2476

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SUMMARY

In November 2002, Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at Albert Street, Holbeach, Lincolnshire, prior to proposed redevelopment of the site for residential use.

The identifiable archaeological potential of the site was for remains associated with the Saxon and mediaeval development of the historic core of the town. Levels of Victorian truncation were very high, leaving only a small area of relatively undisturbed natural drift at the street frontage. Here two undated features (a shallow gully and a possible post hole) were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 During November 2002, Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust (HAT) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at Albert Street, Holbeach, Lincolnshire (NGR TF 359672473) (Figs.1 - 2). The work was commissioned by Peter Humphrey Associates (Architectural Design and Building), on behalf of Tudor Homes, in advance of proposed redevelopment of the site. The evaluation was carried out as part of a planning condition required by South Holland District Council (based on advice from Lincolnshire County Council Conservation Service (LCC CS)), prior to the determination of a planning application to redevelop the site for residential use (Planning Ref. H09/0756/02).

1.2 The evaluation was carried out according to advice from LCC CS and a specification prepared by HAT (dated 10/10/02).

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 The site is situated adjacent to a delegated residential parking area on the west side of Albert Street, approximately 50m south of Holbeach High Street. Holbeach is an historic south Lincolnshire fenland town situated, located within south Lincolnshire, some 10km to the south west of the Wash. The area of proposed development lies on, and to the rear of, Victorian terraced houses and contemporary office buildings. The eastern extent of the plot coincides with 19th century building lines, while the western boundary is within c.75m of the mediaeval church dedicated to All Saints.

2.2 The site comprises a tarmac street frontage access point (shared with the residential blocks to the north), and a larger, rear area, of rough ground, currently vacant. It is c.520 m² in size, accessed from Albert Street.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 Topography, Geology and Soils Archaeological and Historical Background (Fig. 4)

3.1.1 Holbeach lies within an area of marine alluvium, at an average height of 3.00-3.50m AOD.

3.1.2 The ^{site} lies on the western side of Albert Street, to the south of the High Street. It is situated close to the mediaeval parish church, within the historic core of the town. LCC CS note that the street layout in this part of the town originally dates to the 1830s/1840s. Numbers 1-6 Albert Street and the Baptist Chapel are Grade II Listed buildings.

3.1.3 Discoveries of prehistoric remains have so far been sparse in the vicinity. Evidence of Romano-British occupation has been recorded to the south of the town, in the form of find spots and cropmark evidence, with features sometime buried beneath alluvium. Few Roman finds are known from core of the town itself.

3.1.4 Late Saxon/early mediaeval finds are known from the town (Fig. 4) (e.g. at Park Road – SMR 23697/23770, where a pit and slag deposits recorded during an archaeological evaluation/watching brief were possibly of 10th –12th century date). All Saints Church is of mediaeval date, referred-to in 1177 (SMR 22221). The mediaeval settlement of Holbeach (SMR 20227) was recorded at Domesday, with landholdings by the King, St Guthlac, Guy of Craon and Count Alan, with berewicks in Fleet and Gedney. A market and fir was granted to Thomas de Multon in 1253, and a market cross was mentioned in 1273. A probable early 15th century preaching cross in the town centre was pulled down in 1883 (SMR 22227), probably on the site of an earlier cross. Mediaeval finds from the town include and iron spur (SMR 22219) and gold coin of Richard II (SMR 22222), found near the church. Other mediaeval features recorded in the town include the site of the mediaeval All Saints Hospital (founded in 1351 and suppressed by 1545) (SMR 22232), the burial ground of St Peter's Chapel (SMR 22218), and mediaeval bridge remains discovered at Market Hill in 1988 (SMR 23637).

3.1.5 Many period buildings of the post-mediaeval period survive in Holbeach, with malthouses and breweries shown on period maps in the eastern part of the town (SMR 20557).

3.1.6 The site-specific research issues included clarifying the presence of any early features relating to the development of the town in the late Saxon/mediaeval period (in particular 'back-yard' deposits to the rear of the High Street, such as refuse pits, property boundaries and industrial features), and to identify any evidence for the development of the urban character of the town, its layout and the mediaeval economy.

4 METHOD OF WORK

4.1 The evaluation was conducted according to the requirements of LCC CS and according to the specification prepared by HAT. It was also conducted according to the LCC *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook* (1998), the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (revised 1999). The *East Midlands Regional Archaeology Frameworks* (in particular those period frameworks specific to Lincolnshire) were also used to guide the project.

4.2 Two trenches were excavated within the area of the proposed development (Fig. 2), using a 180° wheeled mechanical excavator (JCB) fitted with a smooth-bladed ditching bucket. Trench 1 measured c.10m x 1.6m and was adjacent to the Albert Street frontage. The position of the trench was altered slightly on site, to allow continued access to adjacent residential properties, as agreed with LCC CS. Trench 2, which measured c.12m x 1.6m, was positioned centrally within the footprint of the proposed residential block. Limitations to machine access meant that this trench was very slightly to the east of its proposed position. Topsoil, hard surfaces and overburden were mechanically excavated under close supervision until the underlying archaeological horizons or natural deposits were visible. All further excavation was undertaken by hand. Exposed surfaces were cleaned by hand and examined for archaeological deposits. These were recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate. Excavated spoil was checked for finds and the trenches were scanned with a metal detector.

5 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS (Fig. 3)

Individual trench descriptions are presented below:

5.1 Trench 1

Sample Section (0.00 = 3.30m AOD):

- 0.00 – 0.05m L1000. Tarmac
- 0.05 – 0.14m L1001. Type II crushed buff yellow limestone hardcore, forming base for tarmac surface
- 0.14 – 0.22m L1002 Crushed tarmac hardcore
- 0.22 – 0.55m L1003 Mid brown silty clay with inclusions modern building debris, plastic bags, glass and tin cans
- 0.55m+ L1004. Natural Drift. A buff yellow sandy silt

Description Truncation of the natural drift deposit L1004 was widespread. Modern drains, both in use and redundant, were present throughout the length of Trench 1. Approximately half the length of this trench revealed natural deposits, incorporating two potential archaeological features. A small, truncated post hole, F1019, was recorded in the eastern part of the trench. It was 0.11m in diameter and 0.07m deep. The fill consisted of light brown silt (L1020), with no inclusions or finds. A N/S orientated shallow ditch/gully (F1017) was truncated by a modern drain to the west. It traversed the width of the trench, up to 1.35m wide and 0.11m deep. Once again, the fill (L1018) consisted of light brown silt with no finds. The gully pre-dated Victorian

wall (F1012). This wall, which was aligned parallel to existing dwellings on Albert Street, had a width of 229mm (9") laid in an English Garden Wall bond, with flush pointing. A second wall, built in at a tangent to the former (and therefore most likely contemporary), headed south towards the adjacent plot. While not exactly parallel to existing buildings on the street, it is likely that this wall represents a former structure. A large modern intrusion occupied the western half of the trench. It contained 19th/20th century domestic waste, within a dark grey/brown silty loam matrix. A small test pit confirmed this deposit (L1005) as exceeding a depth of 1.5m below the existing ground level.

5.2 Trench 2

Sample Section (0.00 = 3.28m AOD):

0.00 – 0.15m L1006. Remnant topsoil

0.15 – 0.45m L1007. Type II crushed limestone hardcore. Same as L1001

0.45 – 0.51m L1008. Crushed limestone and red brick hardcore. Levelling layer.

0.51 – 0.70m L1009. Type II crushed limestone hardcore. Same as L1001 & L1007

0.70 – 0.81m L1010. As Tr.1 L1002

0.81 – 1.21m L1011. Mid brown silty clay. As Tr. 1 L1003

1.21m+ L1005. Dark greyish brown silty loam with frequent frogged red brick rubble, glass and other post-mediaeval/modern material.

Description The extent of the domestic waste (L1005), coupled with modern drains, was extant throughout the length of Trench 2, to depth of 1.21m+ (and well below the surviving level of the natural silts in Trench 1). Recent features were recorded in the trench, including frogged brick wall foundations (F1013 and F1016), a brick soakaway (F1014) and a redundant modern brick inspection chamber (F1015).

6 CONFIDENCE RATING

6.1 Whilst Victorian and modern truncation was recorded across the majority of the site, it is not felt that any factors hindered the recognition of archaeological deposits.

7 DEPOSIT MODEL

7.1 Shallow topsoil, within the western area of the site, directly overlay a series of demolition, drain deposition and levelling layers, capping an area of substantial Victorian or early 20th century truncation. The natural marine silts survived only in patches.

8 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

8.1 The archaeological evaluation revealed extensive Victorian/20th century truncation of much of the site (excepting a small area close to the Albert Street frontage).

8.2 A post hole and possible ditch were identified within a small area of the undisturbed silt drift at the street frontage. No dating evidence was present in either feature.

8.3 No residual material of Saxon or mediaeval date was recovered from the site.

8 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION

9.1 The archive will be deposited with the City & County Museum, Lincoln.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Trust is grateful to Tudor Homes for funding the archaeological evaluation and for their assistance (in particular Mr Ashley J King).

HAT also wishes to acknowledge the input and advice of Mr Jim Bonnor and Ms Judy O'Neil of Lincolnshire County Council Conservation Service, and the assistance of Ms Sarah Grundy of the Lincolnshire Sites and Monuments Record.

REFERENCES

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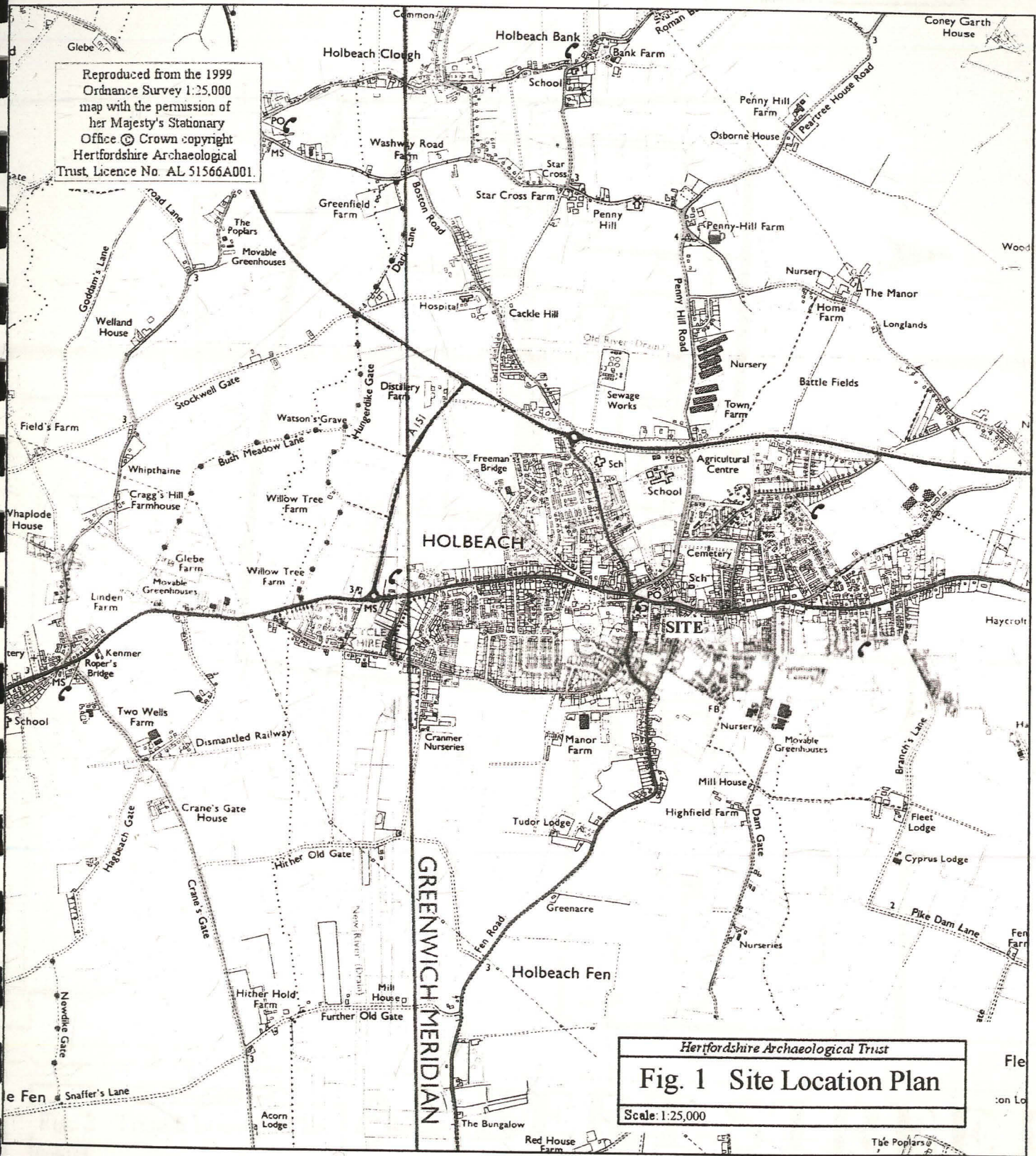
APPENDIX 1

SMR INFORMATION

MONUID	PREFREF	NGR	DESCRIPTION
L120231	20231	TF 35820 24320	Holbeach Railway Station
L122201	22201	TF 36290 24530	Post-mediaeval claypits on Fishpond Lane (formerly Drakes Lane)
L122219	22219	TF 35560 24910	Mediaeval iron spur found during sewerage works
L122221	22221	TF 35890 24770	All Saints Church, recorded as Late Decorated, much restored. Foundations of the church mentioned in 1177 were recorded beneath the 3 west piers of the north arcade. Round towers on the north porch possibly derived from a castle of imitate castle architecture. Entry records the church, path, school, chest tomb etc
L122222	22222	TF 35900 24800	Gold coin of Richard II found near the church in 1833
L122227	22227	TF 35850 24850	Site of a probable early 15 th century preaching cross, demolished in 1883, probably site of earlier cross. Thomas de Multon granted a fair and market for Holbeach in 1253, cross mentioned here in 1273.
L122232	22232	TF 35920 24850	All Saints Hospital, Holbeach, founded by Sir John of Kirton in 1351. Ceased to exist by 1345
L123637	23637	TF 35850 24850	Mediaeval bridge remains exposed during a 1988 excavation on the Old Town Tunnel on Market Hill
L180760	23663	TF 35900 24800	A 1998 trial trench evaluation on the High Street revealed post-mediaeval features. A possible brick cellar was recorded at the rear of the property.
L180761	23664	TF 35900 24800	A 1998 trial trench evaluation on the High Street revealed post-mediaeval features. An undated cobbled floor surface was also recorded
L122218	22218	TF 35750 24370	Burial ground of St Peter's Chapel, Holbeach. A mound to the west of Holbeach Station was levelled in 1867. A number of human skulls were found in association
L181820	23697	TF 35930 24870	Disturbed ditch containing a single Saxo-Norman pottery sherd (Stamford Ware) recorded during an evaluation at 4 Park Road
L182805	23770	TF 35830 24780	A watching brief recorded burnt deposits and single fragment of iron slag from a pit of possible Saxo-Norman date
L182805	23770	TF 35830 24780	Watching brief at 4 Park Road. Iron slag suggests a bloomery furnace
L120230	20230	TF 35620 24790	Stukeley Hall and gardens. Built in 1822 on the site of the site of the Artisan Mannerist family house of the family of the Antiquarian William Stukeley. SMR records hall house, gardens and garden features

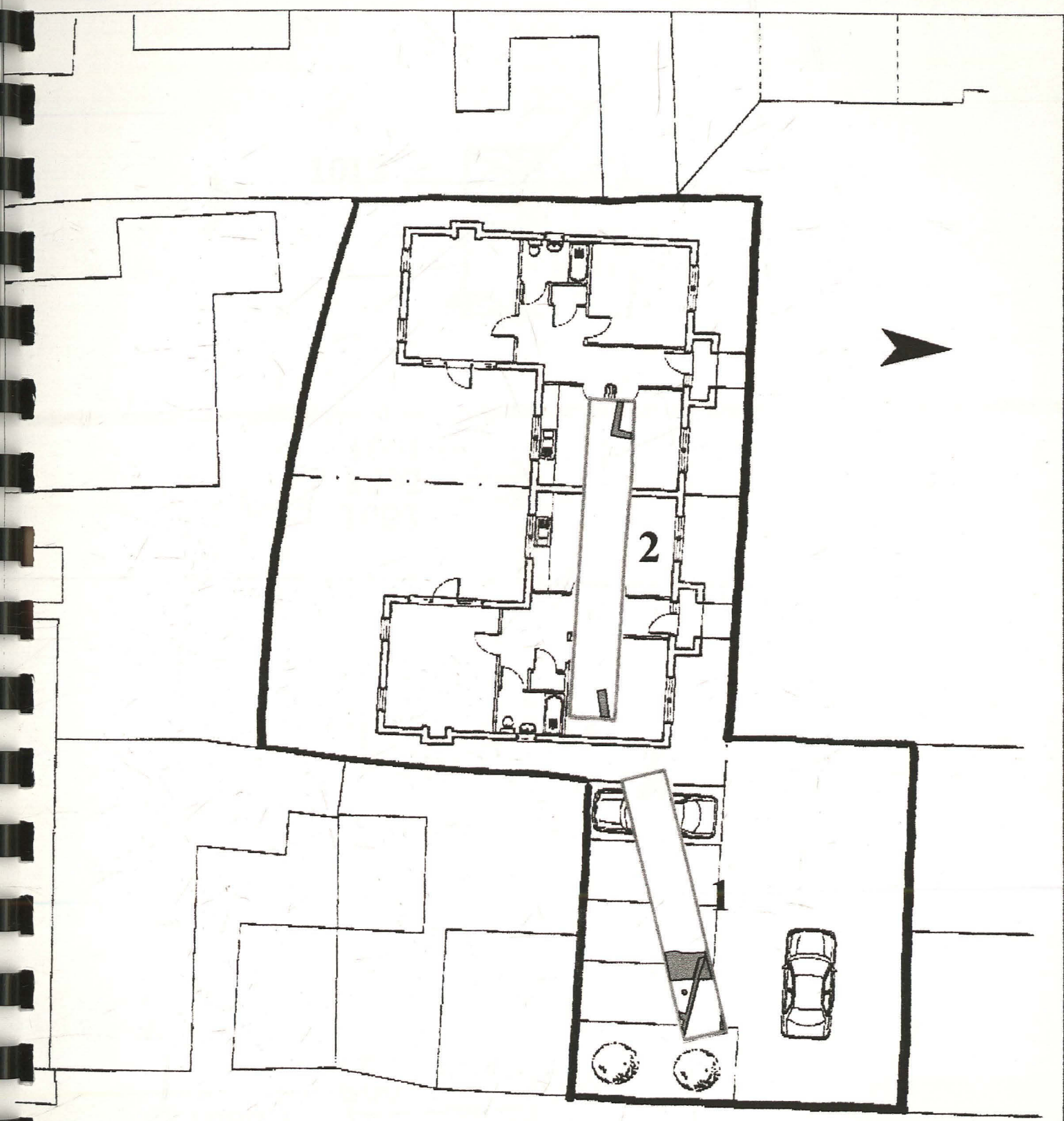
L120557	20557	TF 36040 24790	Post-mediaeval settlement of Holbeach. Many period buildings survive, some listed, with industrial sites, malthouses and breweries indicated on historic maps to the east of the town. SMR entries record the settlement, industrial sites, brick pit, ditches, pit and culvert
L120227	20227	TF 36040 24790	Mediaeval settlement of Holbeach. Domesday entries for manors and landholdings. Owned by the King, St Guthlac, Guy of Craon and Count Alan. Berwicks of manors in Fleet and Gedney. SMR entry records field system, manor, grange and a pit.

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Fig. 1 Site Location Plan
 Scale: 1:25,000

archaeol.



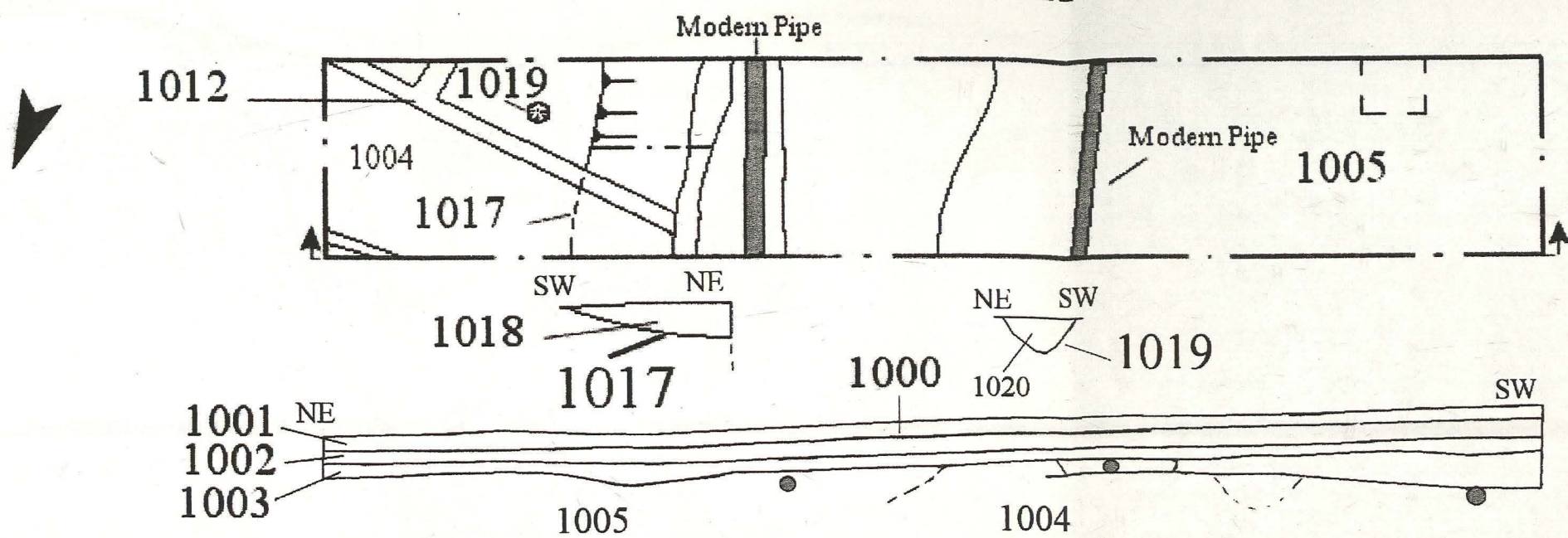
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Fig. 2 Trench Location Plan

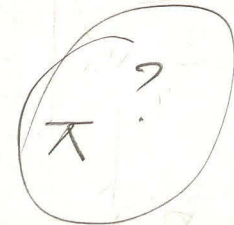
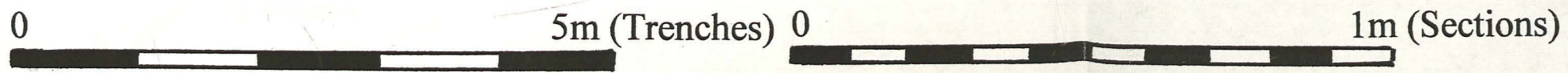
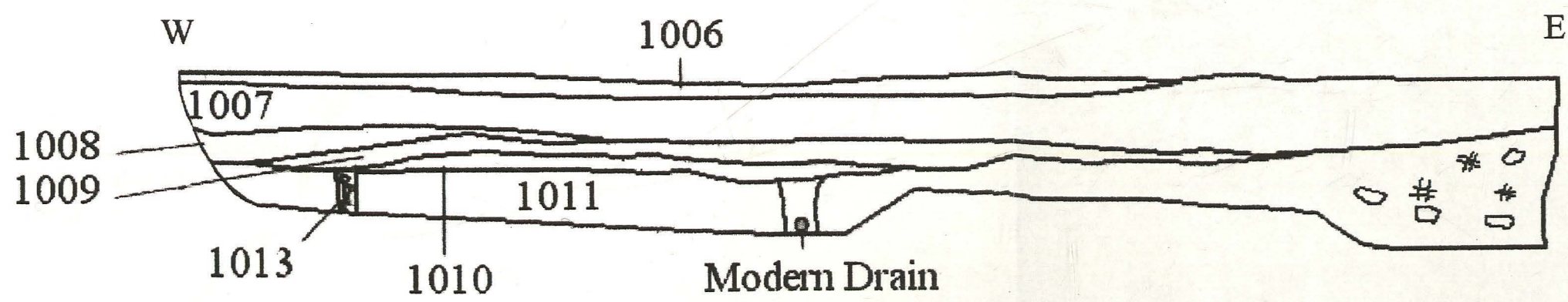
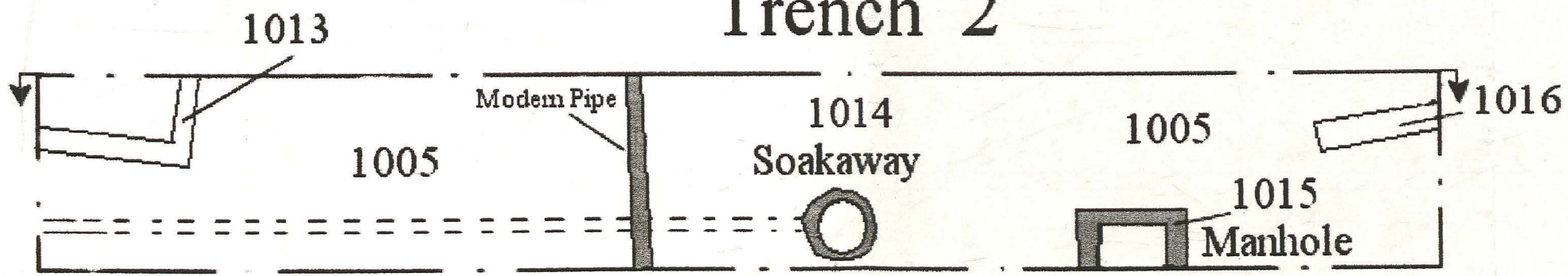
Scale 1:200

ALBERT STREET

Trench 1



Trench 2



Herbertus & Archaeological Trust
Fig. 3 Trench Plans & Sections
 Scale Plans 1:50 & Sections 1:10 at A3

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Sewage Works

Town Farm

Freeman Bridge

Sch

Agricultural Centre

School

OLBEACH

Cemetery

23697

22232

22222-h

22219

22227

23663

20230

23637

20227

23770

22221

20557

SITE

23664

Community Centre

22218

20231

Nursery

Movable Greenhouses

anmer series

Manor Farm

FB

Mill House

Highfield Farm

Dam Gate

Key

- ▲ Anglo-Saxon/Medieval
- ★ Post-medieval
- Undated

Greenacre

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 Fig.4 SMR Information
 Scale: 1:10000



General view of the site



Views of Trench 1



Views of Trench 2