



PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY L I N C O L N

**PLOT AT MEADOW LANE,
NORTH COCKERINGTON, LOUTH,
LINCOLNSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

Site code

N/128/0788/01

NGR:

MLNC 02

LCCM Acc No:

TF 3743 9070

2002.180



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18 JUL 2002

Highways & Planning
Directorate

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Report prepared for Evergreen Corporation Ltd
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July 2002

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Summary

- *An archaeological watching brief took place during residential development on Land at Meadow Lane, North Cockerington, Louth, Lincolnshire.*
- *The watching brief identified a limited range of archaeological features that have been dated to the medieval, post-medieval and early modern periods.*

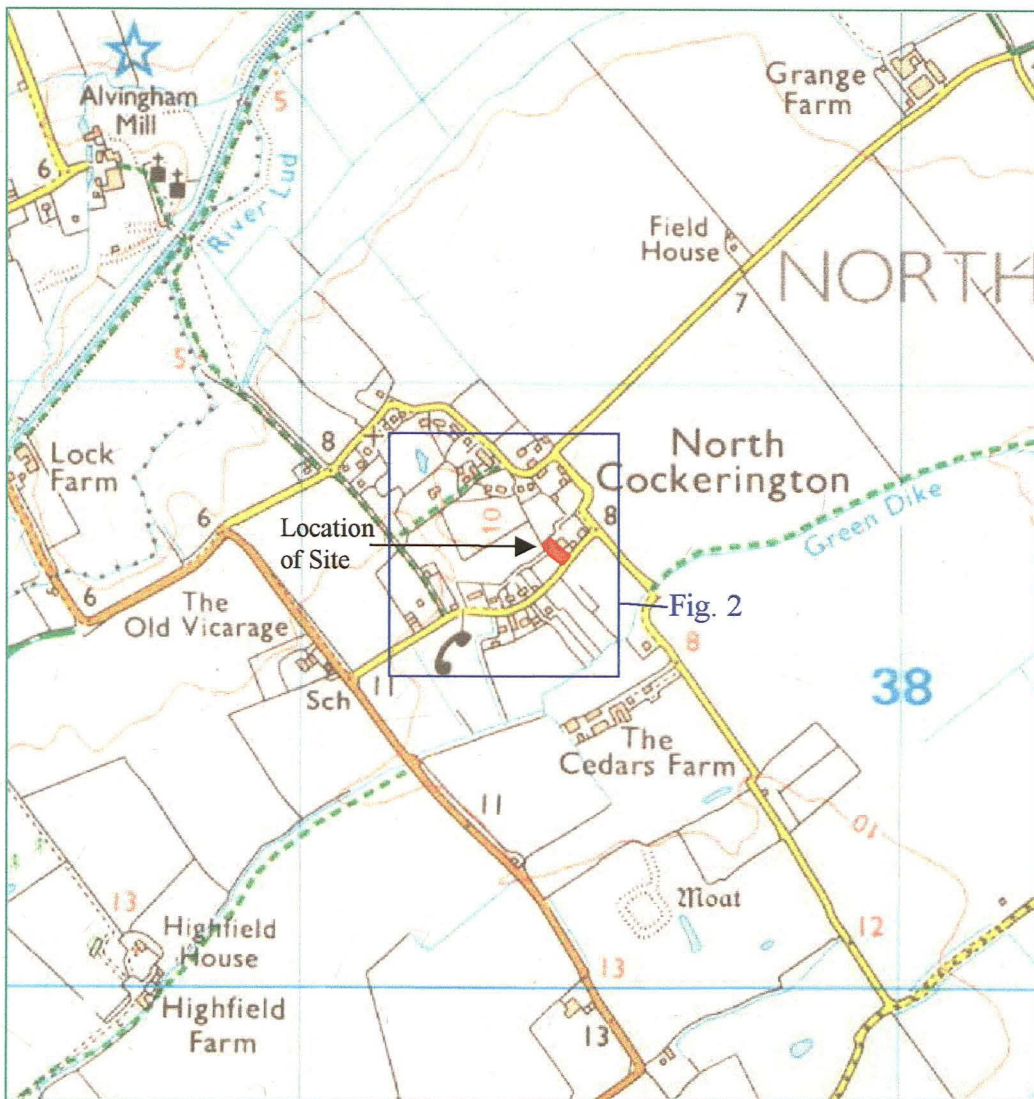


Fig. 1: Site Location. The development plot is shown in red, the area illustrated in fig. 2 is outlined in blue. (Scale 1:12500)
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1.0 Introduction

An archaeological watching brief took place during the excavation of foundation trenches for a single dwelling with detached garage on a plot adjacent to Summerfield House, Meadow Lane, North Cockerington, Lincolnshire (National Grid Reference 53743 39070). The work was commissioned by Evergreen Corporation Ltd., to fulfil a condition attached to planning permission (Ref. N/128/00788/01).

This report documents the results of a programme of archaeological observation and recording; undertaken on the 4th, 7th, 8th, 23rd and 24th April, 2002. The works were undertaken to fulfil the objectives of a formal recommendation issued by the Assistant Built Environment Officer of Lincolnshire County Council, and a project specification prepared by Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln). This approach complies with the recommendations of *Archaeology & Planning: Planning Policy Guidance Note 16*, (Department of the Environment, 1990), *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991), *Standards and guidance for archaeological watching briefs*, (IFA, 1994), and the Lincolnshire County Council document *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: a manual of archaeological practice* (LCC, 1998).

Copies of this report will be deposited with the commissioning body, the Assistant Built Environment Officer for Lincolnshire County Council / the County SMR. A short text will be submitted to the editor of the county journal, *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology*; and this will feature as a short note in due course. Reports will also be deposited at the City and County Museum, Lincoln, accompanied with an ordered project archive.

2.0 Location and Description (Figs 1 and 2)

North Cockerington is a scattered settlement, approximately 5km northeast of Louth, at the western edge of the Lincolnshire Marsh. The development site is located on the south-east side of the settlement, to the north of Meadow Lane (National Grid Reference TF 3743 9070). It comprises a sub-rectangular unit of approximately 750m².

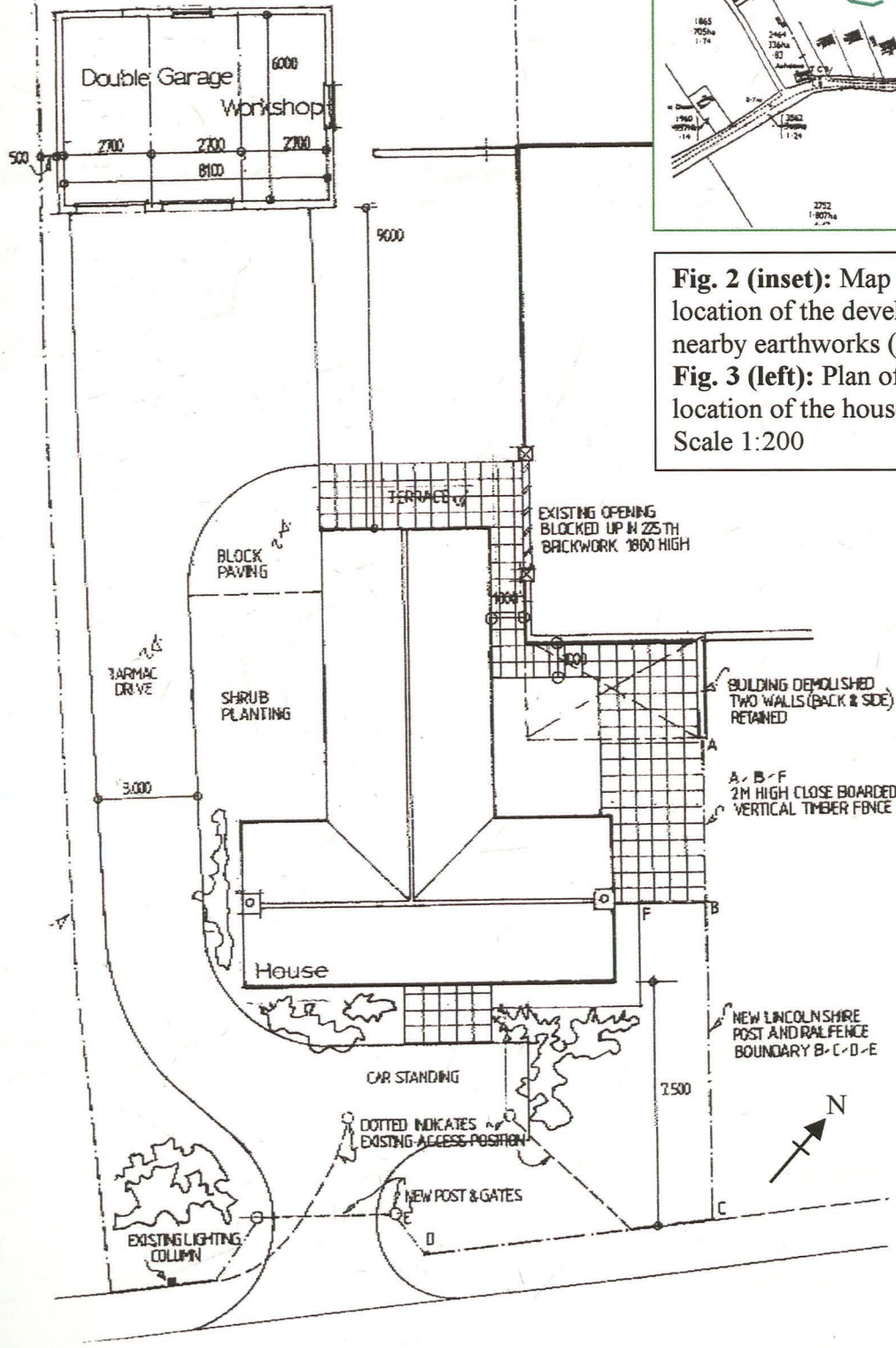
The site lies at an altitude approximately 9.0m above modern sea level, and the geology of the area consists of drift deposits of Devensian Till (Marsh Till) overlying Welton Formation chalk (BGS 1999).

Prior to development, the site was part of the garden of a neighbouring property 'Summerfield House', and was used as a grassed/ hard standing area. The plot is defined by a mature Hawthorn and Ash hedge on the north side, neighbouring Farm outbuildings on the east side, and a post and wire fence and hedge to the west. On the south side, a hawthorn hedge, with an entrance in the centre defines the street frontage. At the rear of the property, a small meadow is approximately 0.4m below the general level of the site, which itself slopes slightly downwards from the road. Due to its former use as hard-standing/lawn, the ground cover comprised a maintained



Fig. 2 (inset): Map extract showing the location of the development (red) and the nearby earthworks (green). Scale 1:5000

Fig. 3 (left): Plan of plot showing the location of the house and garage. Scale 1:200



short lawn with a gravelled drive leading north from the entrance, approximately 15m into the site.

3.0 Planning Background

Planning permission was granted for the erection of a single dwelling with a detached garage (planning ref. N/128/00788/01). The permission was granted subject to an archaeological watching brief being undertaken on all groundworks.

4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

No evidence exists for pre-medieval settlement in this area.

There is an entry for Cockerington in the Domesday Survey of 1086 [*cocrinton(e)*], where no distinction was made between North and South. At that time, there were no less than six manors (estates) formerly held by four Saxon lords in 1066 and four Norman Lords in 1086 (Morgan & Thorne 1986). Further historical references link North and South Cockerington, and in 1334 the returns for the lay subsidy were approximately 40% higher than the Wapentake average, making the parish one of the wealthiest in the area.

North Cockerington has close historical links with Alvingham to the north, where a Gilbertine Priory was founded in the 12th century. Alvingham Priory held extensive estates in the parish throughout the middle ages, and the priory chapel, St Mary's, was given at an early date to the village of North Cockerington, whose own church had fallen into ruin. This has resulted in the curious (but not unique) situation of two churches sharing one churchyard, the other being St Adelwold's, which has always been the parish church of Alvingham.

The Lincolnshire Sites and Monuments Record notes a medieval millstone found in the garden of a house in the village (SMR ref 41373), and a late 17th century farmstead approximately 150m SW of the present development at Home Farm, Meadow Lane, (SMR ref 43595).

The RCHME National Mapping Programme has identified extensive and well-defined earthworks around both North and South Cockerington, dated to 12th-18th centuries; these include the remains of the medieval settlement, now ploughed-out (SMR ref 40318), and the moat of North Cockerington Hall (SMR ref 43595)

Although earthworks were not observed on the site itself, low earthworks are visible in fields to the north, and the well-defined earthwork remains of strip fields and crofts are clearly visible in fields on the south side of Meadow Lane.

A watching brief was carried out during the construction of the neighbouring property to the west by Lindsey Archaeological Services in 1998. This identified two ditches and three pits, all undated (LAS, 1998).

The site is thought to lie within the medieval village envelope.

5.0 Methodology

The site was visited on 4.4.02, when topsoil stripping commenced in the area of the new access road. A narrow strip, 2m wide and 15m long along the western edge of the property was stripped before the contractors were called away to another site and work was discontinued for the day. Site clearance continued on 7.4.02, when the remaining topsoil was stripped in the area of the house plot, and the excavation for the garage foundation slab commenced. On 8.4.02, the excavation for the garage slab was completed, resulting in an area 9.7 x 6.4m excavated to a depth of between 0.35 and 0.5m. Turf was also stripped in a small area on the east side of the plot, where a container had formerly stood. This work was undertaken with a JCB excavator employing a 1.6m wide, flat-bladed ditching bucket.

On 24.4.02, foundation trenches for the house were excavated; these were 0.6 – 0.7m wide and generally 1.1 – 1.2m deep. On 25.4.02, trenches were excavated for the garage (a change of plan, due to the presence of a filled-in field boundary ditch). The foundation trenches for the garage were 0.6 – 0.75m wide, and were generally excavated to a depth of 1.8m, except for the north-eastern 3m of the NW wall, which was excavated to only 1.4m as it was clear of both the earlier ditch and nearby hedges. This work was undertaken with a JCB excavator employing a 0.6m wide bucket. The excavation work was monitored continuously to ensure that any archaeological features exposed were identified and recorded.

The archaeological fieldwork entailed the cleaning by hand of all exposed surfaces, followed by a thorough inspection. All archaeological deposits exposed by this method were subjected to limited excavation to assess their nature/dimensions and to attempt to recover datable material. These investigations resulted in the production of written descriptions of each layer on standard watching brief context recording sheets. Colour photographs and scale drawings compliment these accounts.

6.0 Results

6.1 The Houseplot (fig. 4)

The modern topsoil, context 001, was up to 0.15m deep, and consisted of a very dark brown silty sand loam, containing occasional small rounded flint derived pebbles and rare charcoal flecks.

Below the topsoil was a layer of poorly sorted crushed chalk fragments (up to 0.08m in size), this contained occasional patches of sub-angular broken brick and tile fragments (002). Layer 002 extended over most of the plot to a thickness of 0.1-0.15m. This layer yielded 19th century pottery and two coins (an 1865 farthing and a 1913 penny), and has been interpreted as a make-up/levelling layer for a crew yard, which stood here until the 1970s (according to the former landowner).

Below 002, was a layer of dark grey compact sandy clay containing occasional small rounded pebbles and medium sub-angular flints (003), which appears to be an earlier

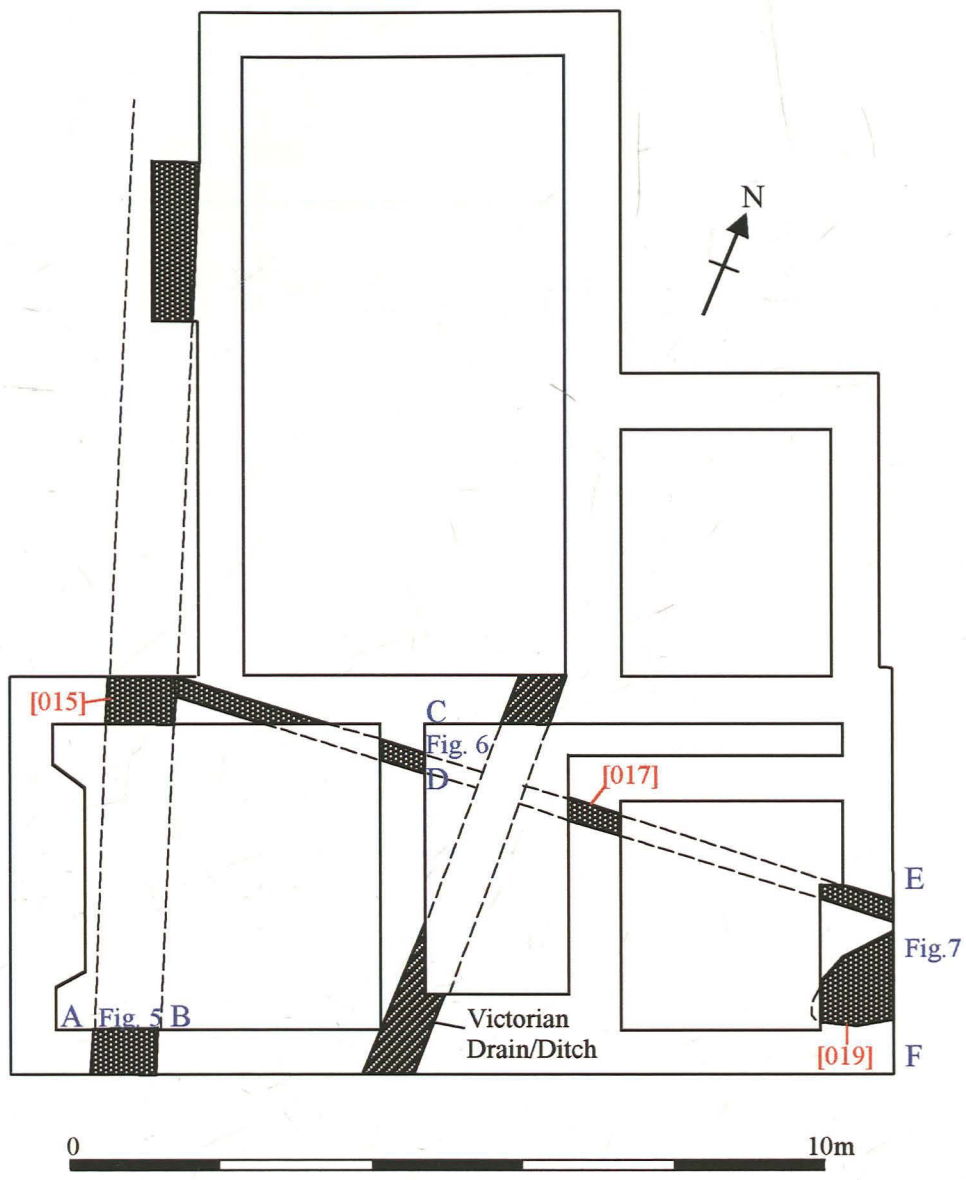


Fig. 4: Plan of the foundation trenches for the house, showing the actual and projected location of the archaeological features. Scale 1:100

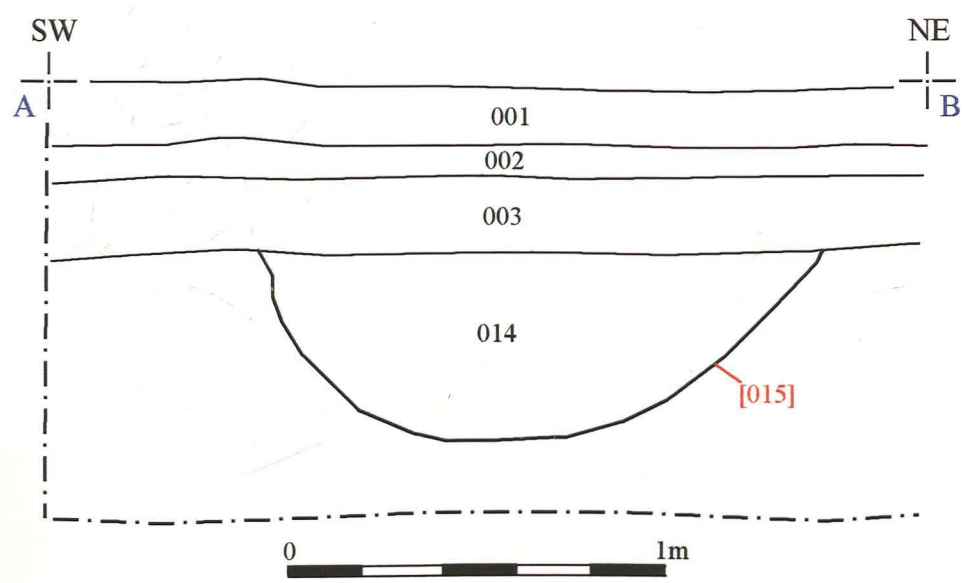


Fig. 5: SE facing section through ditch [015]. Scale 1:20.

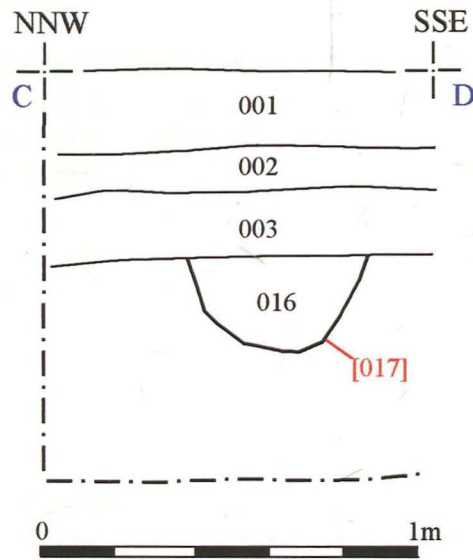


Fig. 6: WSW facing section through gully [017]. Scale 1:20.

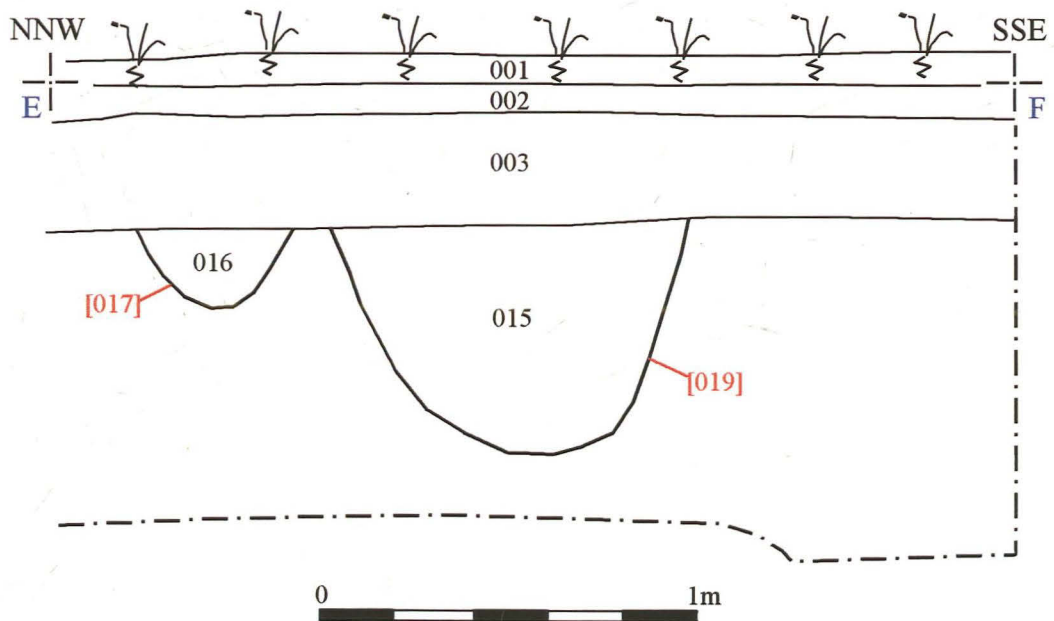


Fig. 7: WSW facing section showing gully [017] and pit [019]. Scale 1:20.

topsoil. One sherd of a pale glazed earthenware bowl was recovered from this layer and dated as 17th/18th century.

In the western part of the site, a subsoil deposit was recorded below 003, This context, 023, consisted of a mid greyish brown clay containing occasional small rounded pebbles and small sub-angular flints along with rare charcoal flecks and was approximately 0.2m in thickness.

A ditch was initially seen at the SW end of the trench for the SE wall of the house. It was aligned NW-SE and was seen again in section in the trench for the NW wall of the lounge and ran from here along the trench for the SW wall of the house, being partially revealed in section in the area widened for a chimney. This ditch, [015], was 1.48m wide and 0.53m deep, with concave sides breaking gently to a flattened 'U'-shaped base (fig. 5). It was filled with dark grey clay containing occasional small rounded chalk pebbles, occasional mottles of redeposited natural clay and occasional flecks of chalk and charcoal, (014). A sherd from the base of a small jug with a thumbled basal edge was recovered and has been dated to the 13th/14th century.

A small linear gully was exposed, aligned E-W, and extending from the E corner of the house plot to the NW end of the trench dividing the lounge from the hall. The gully, [017], was 0.46m wide and 0.25m deep, with a 'U'-shaped profile (figs. 6&7). The fill of this gully, (016), was a mid grey clay with inclusions of occasional small sub-angular flints and occasional chalk and charcoal flecks; heavily mottled with redeposited natural clay on the north side. One sherd from a Toynton/Bolingbroke ware jug, dated 15th/16th century, was recovered from this feature.

In the east corner of the house plot a pit was exposed, [019]. This was probably oval in plan, although it was not completely revealed (fig. 7). In section, it was 0.97m wide and 0.61m deep, with steep, slightly concave sides and a flat base. It was filled with dark grey clay containing occasional sub-angular flint (up to 40mm in size) and occasional flecks of chalk, charcoal and brick/burnt daub. It also contained small, localised patches of redeposited natural clay, up to 50mm in size.

6.2 The Garage (fig. 8)

The detached garage was located in the NW corner of the property in an area of former meadow. According to the previous owner of the farm, a drainage ditch ran east-west along the north side of the existing barn, which has, in living memory, been piped and filled in.

Initially, an area 9.7m x 6.4m was excavated to a depth of 0.35 – 0.5m, for a slab foundation. This involved the removal of topsoil and some truncation of the underlying subsoil in the area of the meadow, exposing the backfilled ditch and pipe trench in plan. Some brick foundations were also encountered (up to three courses of brick set on a concrete sill), purportedly of a former chicken shed.

The topsoil here (005), was a friable, mottled mid-grey/orange grey sandy clay which contained occasional rounded sandstone fragments and brick rubble, also rare charcoal flecks.

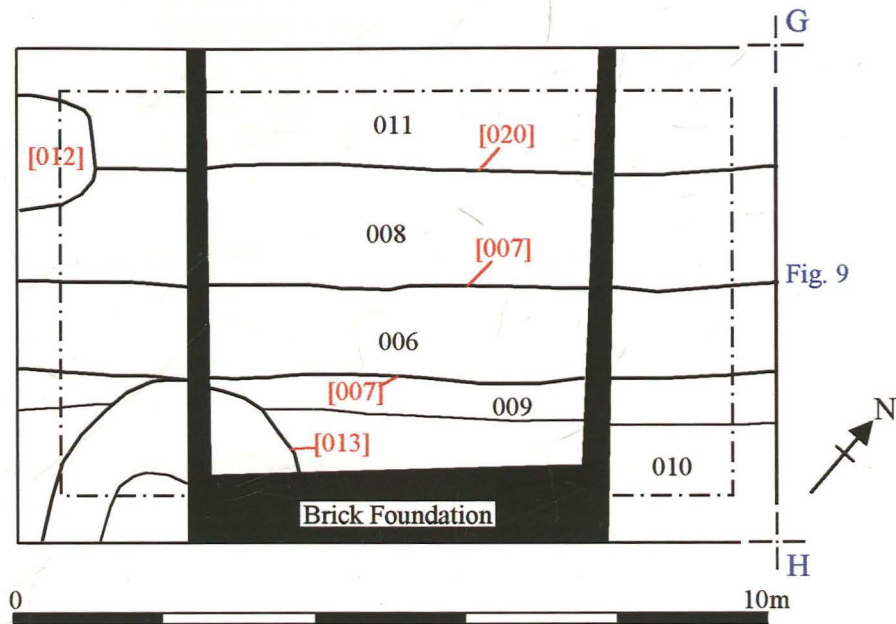


Fig. 8: Plan showing the features exposed in the garage plot, the dot-dash-line shows the inner side of the foundation trenches later excavated in this area. Scale 1:100.

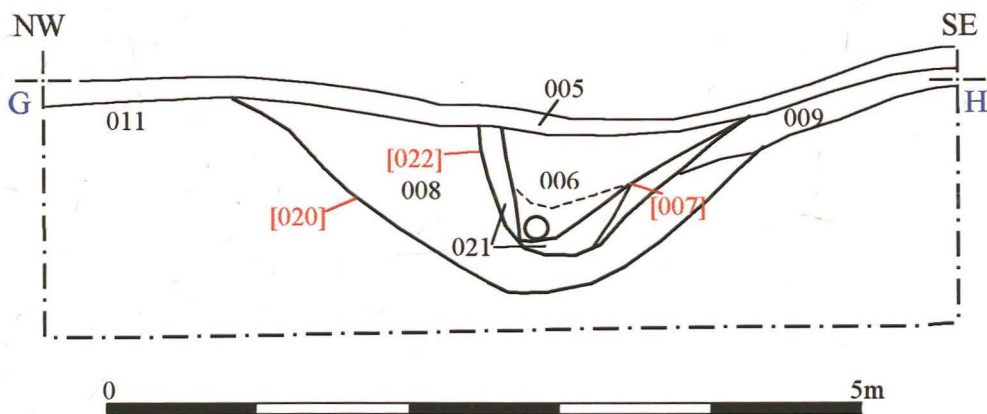


Fig. 9: SW facing section showing the stratigraphy of the boundary ditch [020] seen in the foundation trench for the NE wall of the garage. Scale 1:50

Below 005, and most clearly seen crossing the area, was the pipe trench (007), filled with a redeposited natural (006). The boundary ditch [020] could also be seen in plan and was 2.9m wide and filled with a dark greyish-brown silty clay containing rounded pebbles and occasional chalk flecks (008). The remains of an earlier topsoil, which had lined the south side of the ditch, were also seen (009), along with a subsoil (010) which was beneath it. In the NW corner of the plot was a modern rubbish pit [012] and in the SW corner was a Victorian soakaway [013].

Because of the presence of the former boundary ditch, it was decided to excavate foundation trenches for the garage, as the intended slab foundation may have proved unstable. This gave an opportunity to see the full depth of the boundary ditch and to record a section across it (fig. 9). As mentioned above, the ditch [020] was 2.9m wide; its full depth was 1.08m.

Seen only in the section, the ditch appears to have been recut on the same line but considerably narrower and shallower than the original cut [020]. The recut, [022], was 1.7m wide and 0.75m deep and was filled by a very dark grey marginally compact silty clay, containing occasional small rounded pebbles (021). This material represents the silting of the ditch before the pipe was inserted.

7.0 Discussion and Conclusions

The construction work for this property has, for the most part, not disturbed deposits of any great archaeological significance, and features exposed during the brief have added relatively little new information to the knowledge of the history of North Cockerington. Although only a small amount of dating evidence was recovered, this has allowed features in this area to be attributed to the medieval period, and these features are probably contemporary with extant earthwork remains in the vicinity. Later features have also been identified by the brief, although these also are of relatively limited archaeological potential.

8.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank Evergreen Corporation Ltd. for the commission and their assistance during the watching brief. Thanks are also due to Jane Young for the appended pottery archive.

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10.0 Appendices

10.1 Appendix 1: Colour Plates



Plate 1: General shot of work in progress on the foundation trenches for the house, looking SE. Extant earthworks can be seen in the field in the background.

Plate 2: General shot of the site, looking NW, with the foundation trenches fully excavated. The houseplot is in the foreground and the garage is in the upper left corner.

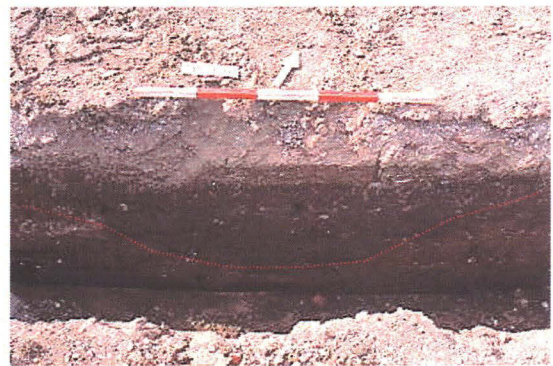


Plate 3: Ditch [015], seen in section at the front of the house, looking NW. Due to bright sunlight, the feature is hard to see and the cut is shown in the enhanced version on the right. (See also fig. 5.)



Plate 4: Gully [017], seen in section in the middle of the houseplot, looking NE.
(See also fig. 6)

Plate 5: Gully [017] and pit [019], seen in section at the SE corner of the houseplot, looking NE. (See also fig. 7)



Plate 6: General view of the foundation trenches for the garage, looking SSE.

Plate 7: The foundation trench for the SW gable end of the garage, seen from the east and showing ditch [022].



10.2 Appendix 2: Pottery Archive

Pottery Archive MLNC02

Jane Young Lindsey Archaeological Services

context	cname	full name	form type	sherds	weight	decoration	part	description	date
003	PGE	Pale Glazed Earthenware	bowl	1	46		base	some soot underneath and over break	17th to 18th
014	ELGQC	East Lincolnshire Glazed Quartz and Chalk fabrics	small jug	1	30	thumbbed basal edge	base	cu glaze	13th to 14th
016	TB	Toynton/Bolingbroke wares	jug	1	6		BS		15th to 16th