

**LAND OFF CHURCH LANE,
MANBY, LINCOLNSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
REPORT**

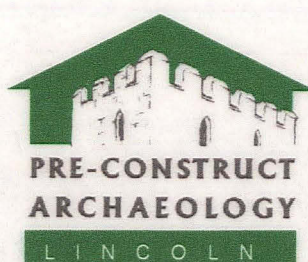
Site code	CLM 03
NGR:	TF 39922 86765
LCCM Acc No:	2003.114
Planning ref.	N/113/1016/99

Report prepared for Studio 21 Interiors

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February 2004



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CONTENTS

Summary	1
1.0 Introduction	2
2.0 Site location and description	2
3.0 Planning background	2
4.0 Archaeological and historical background	3
5.0 Methodology	3
6.0 Results	4
7.0 Discussion and conclusion	4
8.0 Effectiveness of methodology	5
9.0 Acknowledgements	5
10.0 References	5
11.0 Site Archive	5
Appendix 1 Colour plates	
Appendix 2 List of archaeological contexts	

List of Figures

Fig. 1: General site location (scale 1:25,000)

Fig. 2: Plan of the present development works, also showing the previous evaluation trenches (scale 1:500)

Fig. 3: Sample sections of drainage pits (scale 1:20)

List of Plates

Pl. 1: General shot at start of machining

Pl. 2: House plot 1 after machining

Pl. 3: Laying geotextile in house plot 3

Pl. 4: Geotextile and hardcore laid in the access road strip



Summary

- An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the groundworks for a residential development on land off Church Lane, Manby, Lincolnshire.
- An earthwork survey and geophysical investigation identified a number of ponds and boundary ditches of probable medieval date. A subsequent trial excavation of the site revealed a series of features suggesting occupation of the area in the later Iron Age – Romano-British period. A single late Saxon pit was also investigated.
- The watching brief involved monitoring the stripping of Plots 1 – 3 to an agreed depth, the stripping for an access road, and the excavation of service trenches.
- No archaeological deposits were exposed during stripping of the access road and house plots, and drainage trenches were also archaeologically sterile.

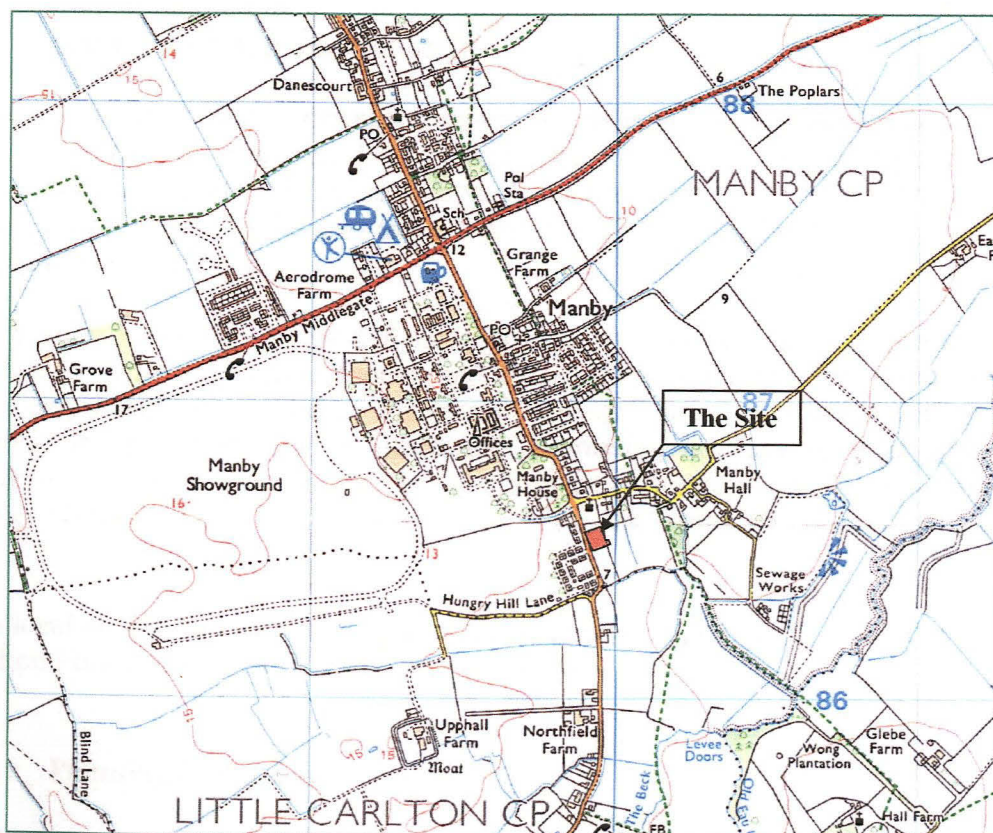


Fig. 1: Site location map: the development site is marked in red. Scale 1:25 000.
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1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) was commissioned by Studio 21 Interiors to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks for a residential development on land off Church Lane, Manby, Lincolnshire. These works were undertaken to fulfil the objectives of a mitigation strategy and a project specification prepared by Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln). This approach is consistent 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 have been deposited with the commissioning body and the County Sites and Monuments Record for Lincolnshire. Reports will also be deposited at the City and County Museum, Lincoln, along with an ordered project archive for long term storage and curation.

2.0 Site location and description

Manby is situated in the administrative district of East Lindsey, approximately 7km east of Louth. The proposed development area comprises a sub-rectangular unit of land towards the south side of the village. A small track runs northwards from Church Lane, giving access to the east side of the site. The parish church of St. Mark lays c.100m to the south-west.

The boundaries of the site are defined by a wooden fence with pasture beyond on the north side of the site, with an access road and a cottage to the east. The south and west sides of the site are bounded by residential properties fronting onto Church Lane and Carlton Road respectively. A substantial depression ran east to west across the northern portion of the site, becoming deeper at its western end. In the north-west corner of the development area was a small pond and a tree. The site centres on NGR TF 3993 8675.

The local geology consists of drift deposits of glacial till, overlying a solid geology of Welton Formation Chalk (British Geological Survey, 1999).

3.0 Planning background

Full planning permission was granted for the erection of three bungalows with integral garages (planning ref.N/113/1016/99). This permission was granted subject to the use of a constructional technique sympathetic to the underlying archaeological deposits and a programme of archaeological monitoring during the preliminary construction procedures.

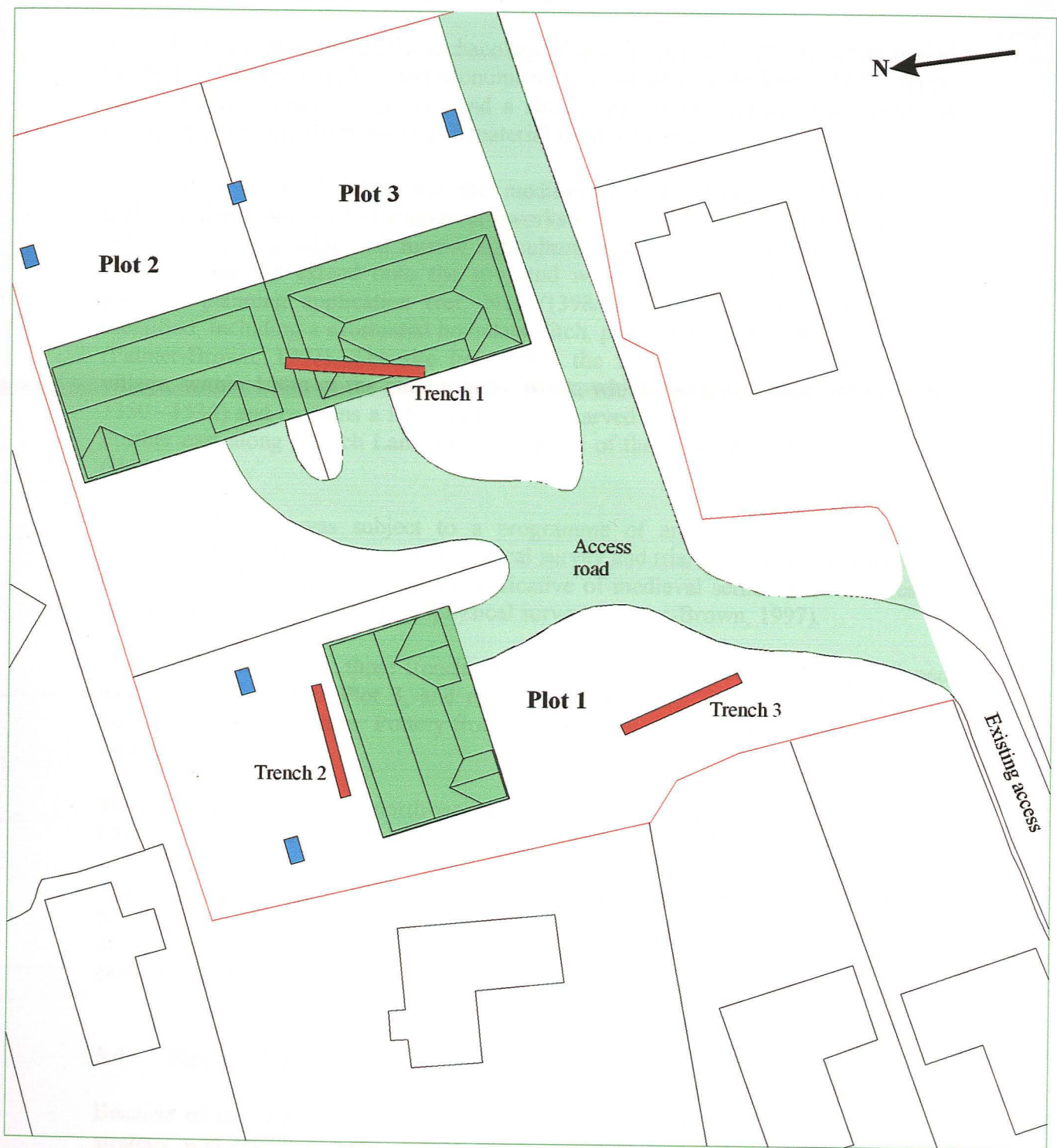


Fig. 2: Development plan showing the stripped areas of the house plots and access road (in green). The former evaluation trenches are shown in red and the drainage pits in blue (scale 1:500).

4.0 Archaeological and historical background

There is very little evidence for archaeological activity predating the medieval period in Manby. The County Sites and Monuments Record for Lincolnshire (SMR) lists no entries for the prehistoric period, and a single coin of the emperor Constantius II contributes the only Romano-British material from the parish.

Evidence is more abundant for the medieval period. Aerial photographs have indicated the presence of extensive earthworks surrounding the development area that indicate medieval ridge and furrow agriculture, and associated settlement remains. These earthworks extend onto the site, and were surveyed in 1996 as part of a previous planning application (ref. N113/1398/96). A number of features were identified, including a substantial boundary ditch, ponds and possible house platforms (Palmer-Brown, 1997). The site lies within the traditional medieval core of the village, within 100m of the church of St. Mark, which has a perpendicular tower (c. 1350 – 1530) and contains a late Anglo-Saxon carved slab (Pevsner & Harris, 1989). Further east along Church Lane are the remains of the Tudor manor of Manby Hall (*ibid.*).

In 1996, the site was subject to a programme of archaeological investigation, involving an earthwork survey, geophysical survey and trial trenching. The earthwork survey identified a series of features indicative of medieval settlement, these results being largely corroborated by geophysical survey (Palmer-Brown, 1997).

In the trial excavation, three trenches were investigated. Trench 1 was positioned within the footprint of Plot 3, and revealed a buried soil that sealed a number of intercutting linear features. Pottery from the largest of the ditches was Middle – Late Iron Age in date.

Trench 2 was immediately north-west of Plot 1 and contained a buried soil cut by a Late Iron Age/Romano-British ditch, and sealing three undated features.

Trench 3 was located to the east of Plot 1. This trench contained the same buried soil horizons as exposed in Trenches 1 and 2. This sealed a Late Iron Age/Romano-British ditch, and a Romano-British gully, which had been cut by a pit containing 9th/10th century pottery (Johnson, 1997).

5.0 Methodology

Because of the significance of the underlying archaeological deposits, a mitigation strategy was established that would allow important archaeological remains to be preserved *in situ* where possible. This was adhered to at all times by the developer. The methodology employed a 360° tracked excavator fitted with a 1.8m wide smooth ditching blade, which was used to strip topsoil to a maximum depth of 300mm across the footprints of the three house plots (plate 2). This depth left approximately 100mm of modern topsoil as a buffer zone overlying the buried soil identified at c.400mm below the modern ground surface. The stripped area was then covered with a semi-permeable membrane and limestone hardcore (plates 3 and 4). At a later date, five sump pits were excavated as part of the drainage works; two pits were excavated to

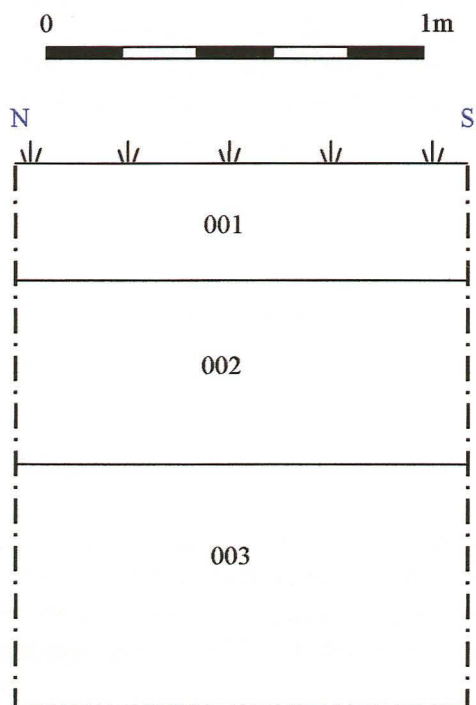
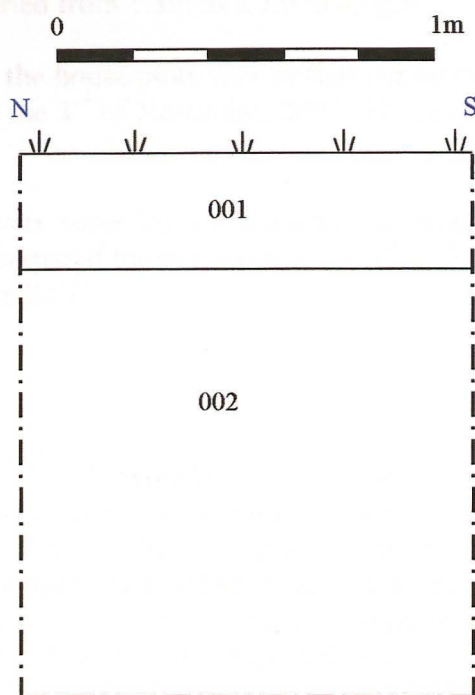


Fig. 3: Sample sections in drainage sump pits 1 (above) and 4 (below). Scale 1:20.

the north of Plot 1, and three to the east of Plots 2 and 3. The pits were 1.45m deep and 1.2m wide, and varied from 1.8m to 2.2m in length.

The watching brief on the house plots was carried out on the 6th and 7th of May 2003, the drainage works on the 3rd of November 2003. The author and K. Cook undertook the monitoring.

Context information was recorded on standard watching brief record sheets, and sample sections were prepared for the drainage pits (Fig. 3). A colour slide record was also maintained (Appendix 1).

6.0 Results

The stripping of Plots 1 – 3 extended to a maximum of 0.3m below the modern ground surface. The house plots were stripped in two separate units; one incorporating the footprint of Plot 1, and the other incorporating the footprint of Plots 2 and 3. The stripping of the access road extended to a maximum depth of 0.2m. This phase of groundworks revealed a dark brown silty loam topsoil, (001). This was relatively homogenous across the development area, although in the eastern portion of the access road, the topsoil contained large amounts of 19th/20th pottery, brick and tile. This material was also observed in the topsoil of Trench 3 of the previous evaluation. In the depression at the west side of Plot 2, the topsoil was moister and slightly siltier than elsewhere.

Stripping of Plot 3 revealed the backfilled Trench 1 of the 1997 evaluation. This had subsided since its original backfilling, and it was deemed necessary to remove the backfill to prevent further subsidence in the completed house. The trench was excavated to approximately 0.8m below the stripped area, down to the natural horizon to which the trench had originally been excavated. This was then lined with 'Terram' geotextile, and filled in with limestone hardcore.

None of the five drainage sump pits, dug the following November, contained any archaeological deposits or features. Pits 1, 2 and 3, on the east side of the development area, were sealed by topsoil 001, which overlay light brown silty clay natural 002. Pits 4 and 5, on the north side, also contained these two deposits, with a very compact blue clay natural, 003, underlying 002 (fig. 3).

7.0 Discussion and conclusion

No archaeological deposits were encountered during the stripping of the house plots and access road. This is because the methodology employed required the removal of only the upper portion of the modern topsoil. The evaluation carried out in 1997 showed that the archaeologically significant deposits were at least 0.4m below the modern ground surface.

It is notable that none of the drainage sump pits contained the buried soil horizon exposed in the earlier trial trenches, but that in all cases the topsoil directly overlay the clay natural; the topsoil itself was considerably shallower than was recorded

during the 1997 evaluation. These pits may lie outside the area of pre-medieval activity recorded in 1997, or the subsequent medieval activity associated with the standing earthworks may actually have destroyed previous remains in these areas: no certain conclusions can be drawn from such small excavations.

8.0 Effectiveness of methodology

The methodology chosen was appropriate and very effective. The raft foundations allowed the archaeological deposits that have been proven to exist on the site to be preserved *in situ*, while the extension of the watching brief to the drainage works confirmed that no further archaeological deposits were disturbed.

9.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank Studio 21 Interiors for this commission, and for their co-operation during the watching brief.

10.0 References

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- Palmer-Brown C., 1997, *Archaeological field evaluation report (Part 1). Land north of Church Lane, Manby, Lincolnshire*, Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln), unpublished report.
- Pevsner N., & Harris J., 1989, *The Buildings of England: Lincolnshire, second edition*, Penguin, London
- Johnson S., 1997, *Archaeological field evaluation report (Part 2). Land north of Church Lane, Manby, Lincolnshire*, Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln), unpublished report.

11.0 Site archive

The documentary archive for the site is currently in the possession of Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln). 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 2003.114.

Appendix 1: Colour Plates



Plate 1: General shot of the development area at the beginning of machining, looking SW. Raised earthworks are visible in the field.



Plate 2: House plot 1 after completion of the topsoil strip, looking W.



Plate 3: Laying geotextile and hardcore in the footprint of house plot 3, looking S.



Plate 4: Hardcore and geotextile laid in the access road strip, looking NE towards house plot 3.

Appendix 2: List of contexts

- 001** Mid- to dark brown silty loam topsoil
- 002** Light brown natural silty clay deposit
- 003** Compact light blue natural clay deposit