M4/21

ASHING LANE, DUNHOLME, LINCOLNSHIRE.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

Site Code: SLDA03
NGR: ~~SK~~ TF 0278 7932
Planning Ref. M00/P/0735
Accession No. 2003.140.

Report prepared for Sharward Construction Ltd

by

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EVENT L16032 SOURCE L110099 L110100 PRN 54607 Undated

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Summary

- *A program of archaeological observation and recording took place on land situated on the south-east edge of Dunholme, Lincolnshire, to investigate an area that was potentially at threat from a residential development.*

- *The fieldwork identified a large north-south ditch, running parallel with a feature that had been recorded during a pervious phase of work on an adjacent plot. These features may be part of a large enclosure or field system.*

- *In one area, re-deposited material was observed, suggesting the presence of a former pond. Trench excavation for another plot revealed laid stones of uncertain date.*

- *Excavations for site access were not monitored.*

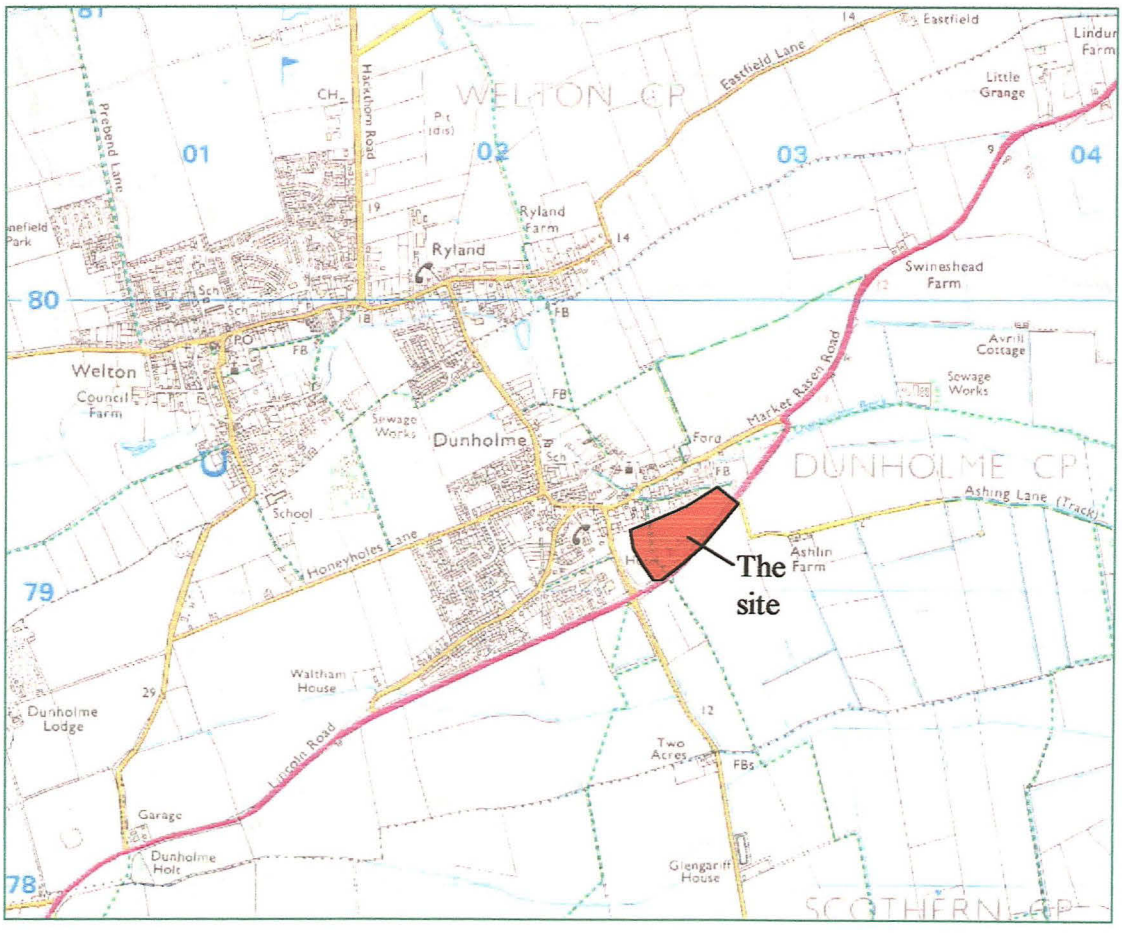

Fig. 1 : General site location depicted in red (for detail see fig. 2.)
Scale 1:25 000

1.0 Introduction

Sharward Construction Ltd. commissioned Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) to undertake a programme of archaeological observation and recording on land situated off Ashing Lane in the angle of Scothern Lane and Dunholme Road, Dunholme, Lincolnshire. These works were undertaken to fulfil the objectives of a formal project brief issued by the Lincolnshire County Council Built Environment Team. This approach complies with the recommendations of *Archaeology and Planning: Planning Policy Guidance Note 16*, Dept. of Environment (1990); *Management of Archaeological Projects*, EH (1991); *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*, IFA (1999) and the LCC document *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: A Manual of Archaeological Practice*, 1998.

The full archaeological programme took place between the 9th and 17th October 2003.

Copies of this report have been deposited with the commissioning body and the County Sites and Monuments Record for Lincolnshire. A summary 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, along with an ordered project archive for long term storage and curation.

2.0 Site location and description

Dunholme is approximately 6.5km north-east of Lincoln in the administrative district of West Lindsey. The overall development site comprises a sub-rectangular unit of approximately 7.5 hectares, bordered by residential properties to the north, the A46 Dunholme by-pass to the south-east, and Scothern lane to the south-west. It is situated towards the base of a ridge of higher ground running NNE-SSW, along which Scothern Lane and Hackthorne Road run. To the north is Dunholme Beck.

The current watching brief was concerned with the easternmost section of the development, comprising plots 1-10; an area of approximately 0.6 hectares (Fig 2).

The site is situated over a geology of Kellaways Formation Sandstone, which is overlain by an aeolian deposit that is up to 1m thick in places (2001 excavation records).

The National Grid Reference for the centre of the site is TF 0259 7918.

3.0 Planning background

Full planning consent was granted for a residential development by Sharward Construction Ltd. This planning permission was granted subject to a voluntary (Section 106) agreement between the developer and West Lindsey District Council. As part of this agreement, Sharward Construction Ltd commissioned Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) to carry out a programme of archaeological observation and recording in accordance with directives issued by West Lindsey District Council. The results of this programme are presented in this, and a series of preceding reports. The current report represents the results of a final mitigation strategy for the area.

The West Lindsey District Council planning reference for this development is MOO/P/0015.

4.0 Archaeological and historical background

The earliest activity within the parish is indicated by a polished stone axe of Neolithic date (PRN 53159) that was recovered immediately to the east of the site, and Bronze Age flint tools and cores; recovered during construction of the Dunholme Bypass, (Tann 1987). In isolation, these finds tell us relatively little about the early social geography of the area, but they do show activity during the 3rd and 2nd millennia BC.

For the later Iron Age, there is evidence of more sustained occupation of the area. A rare gold coin (PRN 80309) was recovered immediately to the east of Dunholme in 1998, and cropmarks to the north (PRN 53135) appear to represent enclosures and at least one circular building. A watching brief to the east of these cropmarks exposed ditches and a droveway associated with Late Iron Age pottery and animal bone (Albone 1997).

For the Romano-British period, there are three relevant SMR. entries, each comprising pottery scatters; one from approximately 200m east of the site (PRN 53152), and two others from the north (one from gardens bordering the site (PRN 53148)). Evidently, some form of Romano-British settlement occurred close to the development site, which presumably fell within the *territorium* of *Lindum* (Whitwell 1992, 24).

Evidence from Domesday Book suggests that Dunholme was in existence from at least the later Anglo-Saxon period. The village appears as '*Duneham*', interpreted as homestead or village at a hill, from the Old English dun and ham (Mills 1993). A scatter of Saxon pottery (PRN 53149) has been recorded approximately 100m north-east of the site, and clearer evidence for Anglo-Saxon occupation was identified during two recent field evaluations (below).

Physical and documentary evidence relating to the medieval period is comparatively abundant. To the north of the development site, in Grange Close, remains thought to be part of the bishop's manor or grange were recorded in aerial photographs before levelling of the ground surface took place in 1948. A monastic property, acquired by the Grantham family in 1545, gave rise to a substantial dwelling, thought to be the old manor house of Dunholme (PRN 5318). It has been suggested that the property was surrounded by a moat (Leach 1964, 21), and evidence for this was found during the watching brief on the western part of this development (Section 6.1 below).

There is a record of a water mill in Dunholme Mill Field, approximately 200m north-west of the current site, (PRN 53141). In this location, millstone fragments and domestic refuse demonstrate abandonment in the 19th century, as demonstrated by excavations in 1959 (Whitwell and Wilson 1969, 114).

A stone wall 'of a medieval manor house' (PRN 53147) was recorded in an un-provenanced back garden, and a building complex associated with medieval pottery was recorded to the north of the site during field walking (PRN 53150).

Medieval ridge and furrow has been recorded at two locations to the south-west of the village, (PRN 54181 and 54177).

The post-Medieval population of Dunholme suffered a sharp decline in the mid 17th century, which may be linked to its enclosure, *circa* 1662, (PRN 53157). In the 19th century the village was almost completely rebuilt, using locally produced brick, (Leach 1968), the production of which was centred to the east of the village (PRN 53161).

An evaluation took place on the development site in November 1999, consisting of seven trial trenches (Allen 2000a). Archaeology was present in all of these, excluding one area in the extreme south-west of the site. On the north-west side, truncated stone building remains were exposed, believed to be associated with the documented site of Dunholme Manor. Further stone building remains were exposed on the extreme east side of the site, possibly associated with one of the medieval Bishop's palaces. On relatively high ground that occupies the south-east-central part of the site earlier features were exposed, including aspects of what is probably a field drainage system of Romano-British or Anglo-Saxon date. Anglo-Saxon features sealed beneath wind-blown sand deposits were exposed in this area, and some of these were believed to be structural.

A second evaluation took place on the development site in July 2000 (Allen 2000b), involving the excavation of four further trial trenches. The purpose of these works was to provide further information that would inform a mitigation strategy for Phase II of the development. The evaluation helped to clarify the extent and significance of early and later Anglo-Saxon settlement remains that appeared to focus on a sandy knoll close to the south-east-central area of the site. These remains included ditches and gullies, linear slots, pits and at least one possible early Saxon sunken building (popularly known as 'pit dwellings' or *Grubenhauser*). Some of these features contained well preserved environmental remains and animal bones.

The Phase II Evaluation of this area exposed a high level of medieval activity (predominantly 12th/13th century), but much of this appeared to be associated with sand quarrying, presumably for local construction.

Work carried out on the site in 2000 and 2001 by P.C.A. recovered evidence for Prehistoric and Romano-British activity in the form of worked flints, pottery and cut features. Evidence from the Anglo-Saxon period suggested the site was used for cattle rearing and cereal processing, there was also a pit filled with burnt flints possibly used to boil water. In the northwest corner of the development, stone foundations believed to be part of the medieval Manor of Dunholme were recorded, while to the east of the site numerous ditches and pits believed to date from the late Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods were observed, (Brett and Allen, 2002).

The section of the development forming the current watching brief was itself subject to a geophysical survey and field evaluation by the City of Lincoln Archaeological Unit (CLAU) in 1998. The position of three evaluation trenches is illustrated on fig. 3, along with the locations of numerous geophysical anomalies. None of these anomalies corresponded with features recorded in foundation trench sections during the watching brief, although the CLAU Evaluation Trench 1 was recognised in the sections of trenches within plot 7.

5.0 Methodology

The groundworks were monitored by Chris Clay and Rachel Gardner of PCA from the 9th to 17th October 2003. A 360^0 tracked excavator fitted with a 0.8m wide toothed bucket was used to excavate the house footing trenches, and this work was continuously monitored by P.C.A. The methodology also required the monitoring of the access road during soil stripping. However, PCA were not informed when this work actually took place, so the access was not monitored.

The archaeological fieldwork involved the cleaning by hand of exposed surfaces within the house footing trenches, followed by a thorough inspection. All archaeological deposits identified by this process were subjected to limited excavation, in order to assess their nature and dimensions and to attempt to recover datable materials. These investigations resulted in the production of written descriptions of each layer upon standard watching brief context record sheets. Colour photographs, scale section, and plan drawings compliment these accounts.

6.0 Results

The uppermost material extending through plots 1-10 was a modern disturbed topsoil mixed with decaying vegetable matter; formed during clearance of the site. Across plots 1-9 the topmost *in situ* deposit was (101), a dark brown sandy loam containing modern building rubble. The topsoil on house plots 9 and 10 consisted of dark grey brown clayey sand, (103) and (111), and this also contained modern materials.

Beneath a second layer of buried topsoil, (114), a wide linear feature [115] was observed running roughly north to south through the exposed sections of plot 8, (See Fig: 5 sections 8a and 8b). This feature was 2m wide and 0.8m deep and had a moderately sloped and rounded profile with flat base. Its fill, (116), was compact mid grey clay with some occasional lenses of gravel occurring towards the base. The feature was not observed continuing through plots 9 or 10 to the south.

Plots 2-7 were apparently void of archaeological deposits. Representative sections of their foundation trenches were drawn to record the consistent matrix of topsoil, (101), covering (102), a mottled light brown grey layer of the natural subsoil. In plot 9 a slight variation of this matrix was observed in that context (112), a 0.40m deep layer of dark grey brown clayey sand with modern inclusions, lay sandwiched between (101) and (102).

In plot 1, (101) was recorded overlying (102) but it was noted that in the south east corner of the plot, (102) varied slightly and had a blue-grey hue. This could reflect localised silting (a site contractor informed the archaeologist that this was previously the location of a pond). The extent of this variation and the position of a pit containing modern cable and metal fragments (observed in the north east corner of plot 1) are illustrated on figure 3.

Plot 10 contained a number of possible archaeological deposits. Context [104], (see sections 10 and 11, figure 5), consisted of a number of limestone blocks and fragments with a sand infill; this deposit was clearly a modern layer of 'Type 1' similar to material seen dumped across the site, (Chris Clay, pers. comm.). It was overlain by (103); a layer of dark brown grey clay topsoil that also contained limestone fragments. A layer of mid grey brown compact fine sandy clay, (105), lay beneath [104]. Beneath this was (106) which consisted of compact mid grey clay with occasional lenses of gravel. This was deemed the natural subsoil in the area of house plot 10.

A section recorded in the south west corner of plot 10, (see section 13, figure 5), to included another stoney layer, (108). This consisted of one regular coarse of three limestone blocks approximately 0.2m high. Above (108) was a layer of mid grey brown fine sandy clay, (107), containing frequent limestone fragments. A similar deposition of masonry was not observed in the trench wall opposite section 13.

A pit, [110], was observed in the south east corner of plot 10. This had steep sides with an abrupt flat base. It was 0.55m deep and 0.70m wide and filled with mid grey brown fine sandy clay, (109). The pit truncated contexts (105), (106) and (107) and was sealed beneath layer (101). Although no dating evidence was recovered, its position, relatively high in the recorded section, suggests it was probably of relatively late date.

7.0 Conclusions

Three possible archaeological features were exposed during the course of the watching brief.

The substantial ditch observed extending through plot 8 was comparable with a ditch recorded on the same alignment to the west in September 2003 (Brett 2003). In conjunction with an east-west aligned ditch, found to the south west in 2002, (Brett and Allen 2002), these features could represent elements of a field system or enclosure. It is, however, difficult to interpret how they related to each other given that such limited sections were available for assessment. Also, a general lack of dating evidence does not assist. Given that the large ditch did not appear to continue through plots 9 and 10 to the south, the extent of [115] is unclear.

Layer (108) may represent an area of laid stone in the location of plot 10. Medieval stone foundations have been found on the site along with numerous Anglo-Saxon ditches and gullies and this deposit may relate to these. However, the lack of dating evidence makes this impossible to verify.

The position of pit [110] directly beneath the topsoil within plot 10 and its well defined and 'sharp' edges suggest it was probably of a relatively recent date, although a lack of dating evidence makes this difficult to resolve.

The foundation trenches for plot 1 revealed a modern pit and a possible pond area, which could date anywhere from the medieval period onwards. The possible extent of this has been illustrated on figure 3. A feature interpreted as a possible pond or quarry pit, [360], was recorded during the 2001 watching brief, some 80m to the north of this feature, (Brett & Allen, 2002), but it seems unlikely that the two were physically related.

The fact that none of the geophysical anomalies represented in figure 3 were observed within the foundation trench sections on the site could perhaps be explained by inaccuracies in mapping. In addition, the geophysical survey may have detected geological variations that were not visible in section during the watching brief (retrospectively, it is suggested that the site may not have been suitable for magnetic survey, given the high levels of recent disturbance that were evident over wide areas). A corner of Evaluation Trench 3, which was positioned to target some of these anomalies, was identified in the trench sections of plot 7.

8.0 Effectiveness methodology

The methodology employed allowed a full inspection to be made of the sections of all foundation trenches, with minimal disruption to the primary scheme, and a record to be made of any archaeological deposits encountered. However, the watching brief on the access road did not take place, because the archaeological contractor was not informed.

9.0 Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank Sharward Construction Ltd, for commissioning this project, and for providing some of the drawings used during the preparation of this account.

10.0 References

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11.0 Site Archive

The site archive [documentary) for this project is in preparation and will be deposited at the Lincoln City and County Museum and the Lincolnshire Archives Office [documentary) within six months. Access may be granted by quoting the global accession number 2003.140.

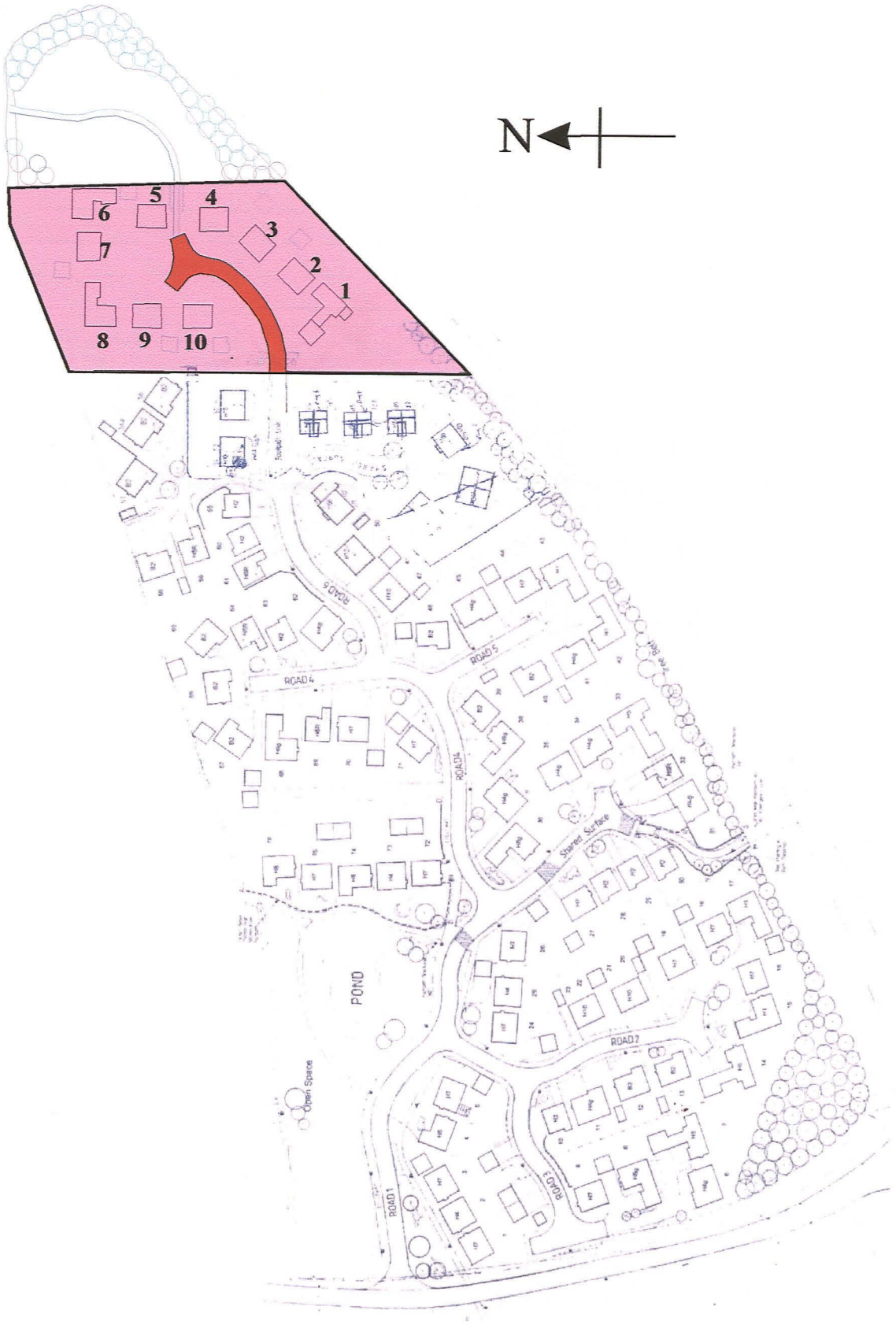
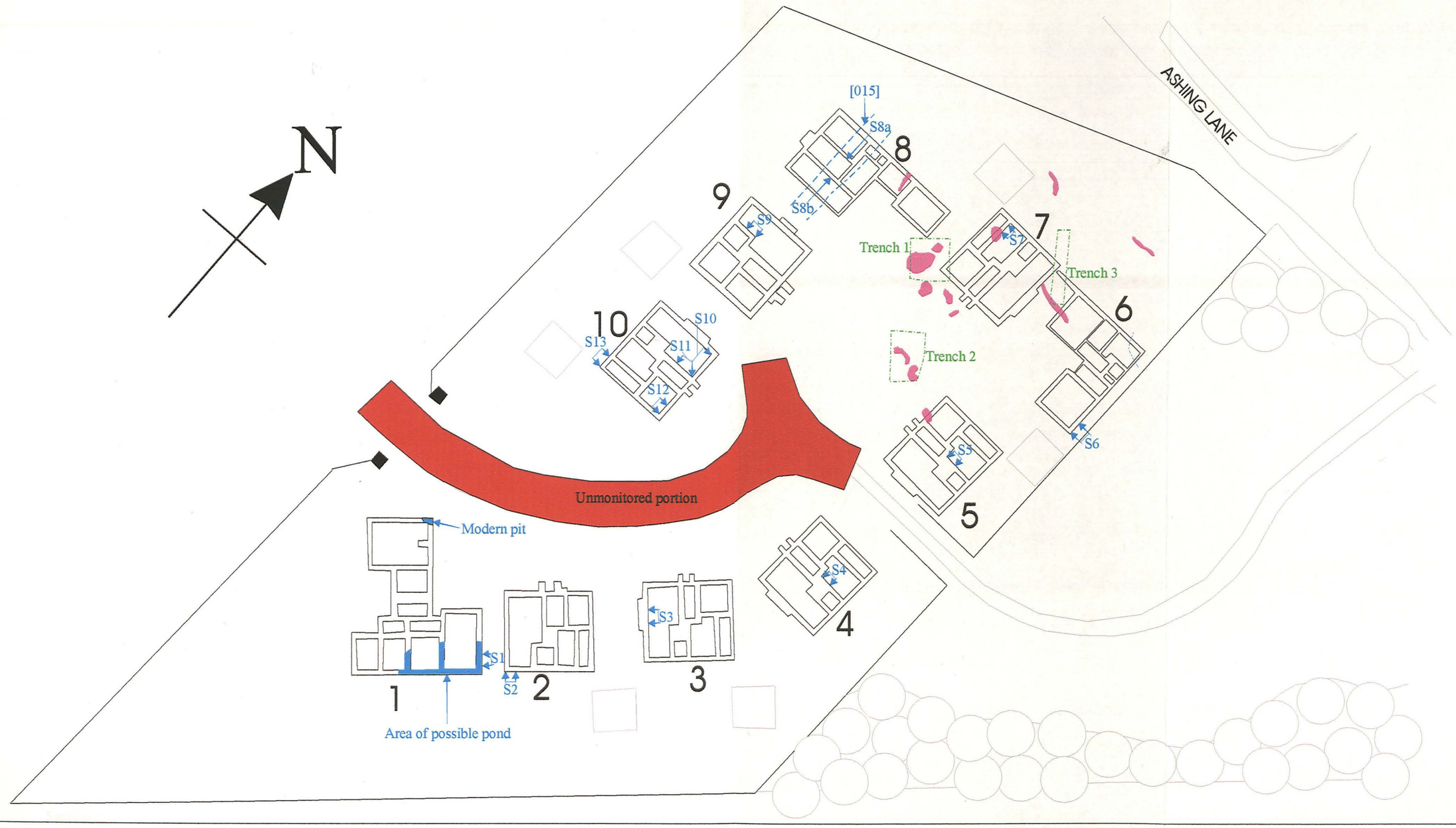


Fig 2: Site plan showing area monitored with outlines of individual house plots 1-10. The unmonitored area is shown in red. 1:2000



Position archaeological deposit recorded during watching brief.

S1-9 Position of section recorded during watching brief.

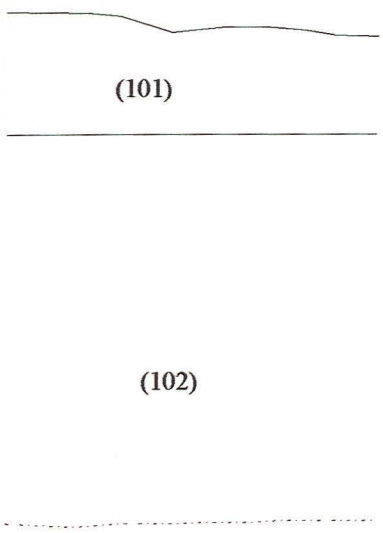
Position of evaluation trench excavated by City of Lincoln Archaeological Unit, (1998).

Possible extent of feature recorded during watching brief.

Position of geophysical anomaly.

Unmonitored portion

Fig 3: Monitored area showing foundation trenches for individual house plots 1-10, the position of archaeological deposits observed during the watching brief and the position of recorded sections 1-13 . Trenches 1-3 indicate the position of evaluation trenches excavated in 1998 by C.L.A.U., and geophysical anomalies are indicated in mauve. Scale 1:500.



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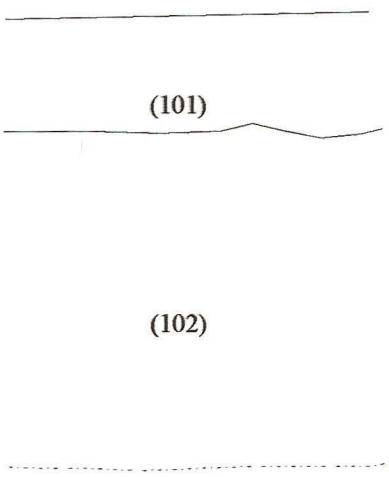

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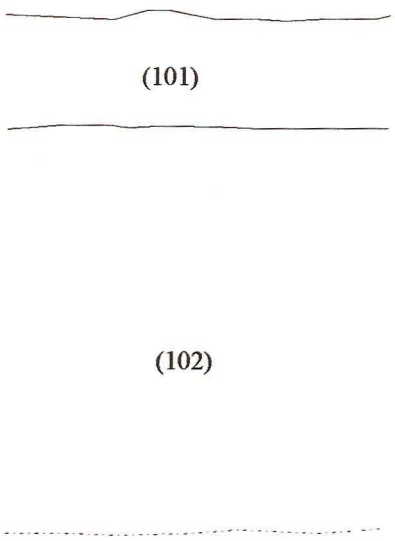

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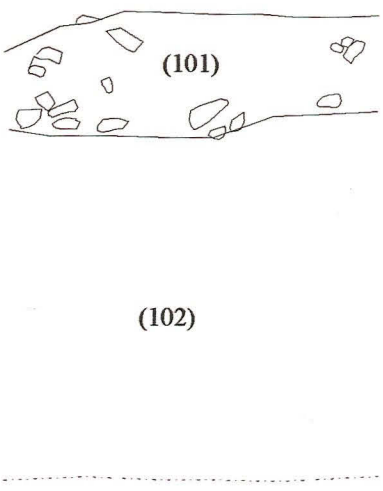
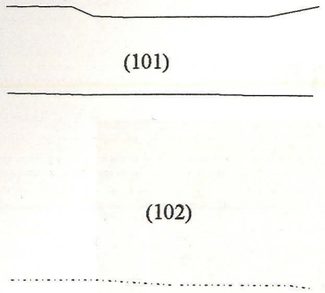


Section 4

Scale 1:20

Fig 4: Sections 1-4 all at scale 1:20.



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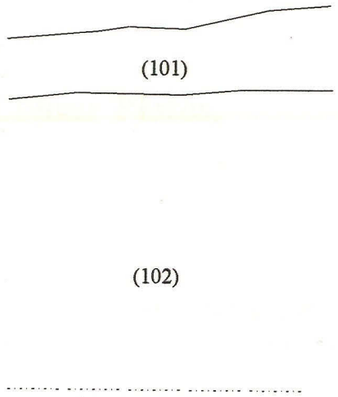

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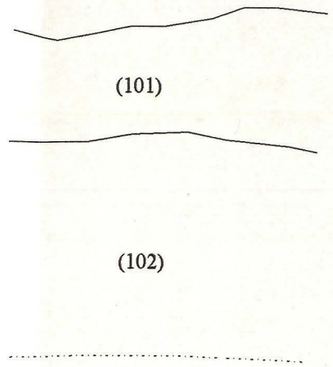

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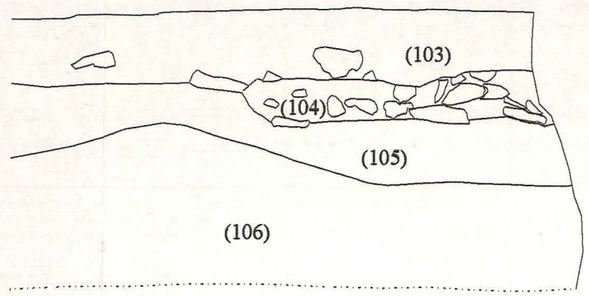

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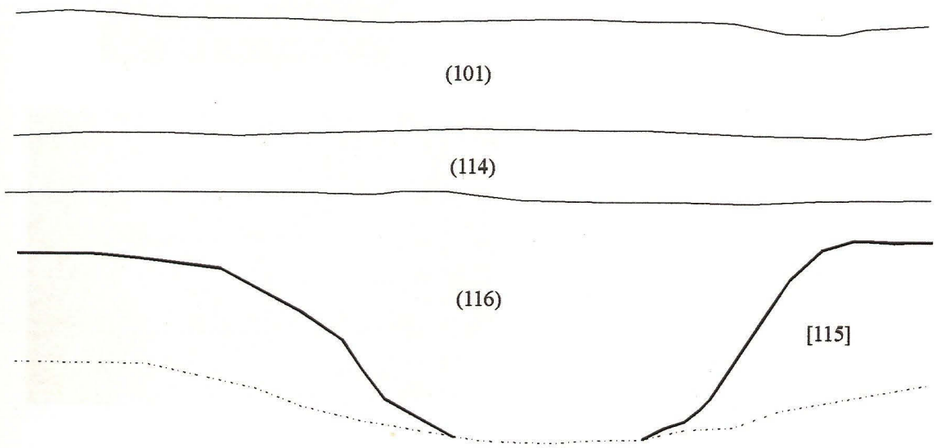
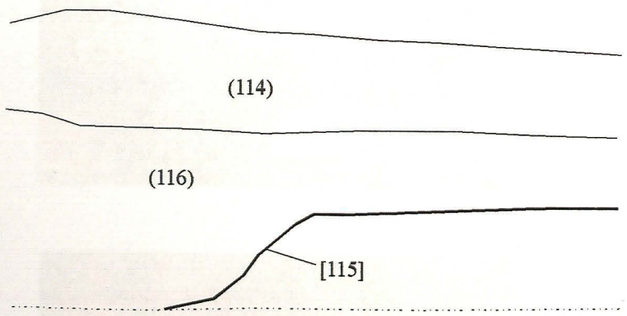


Section 8b



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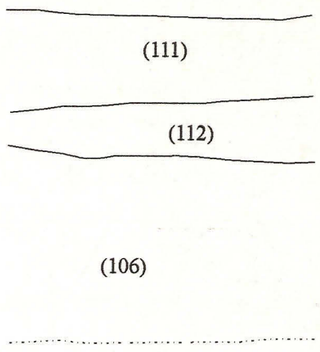

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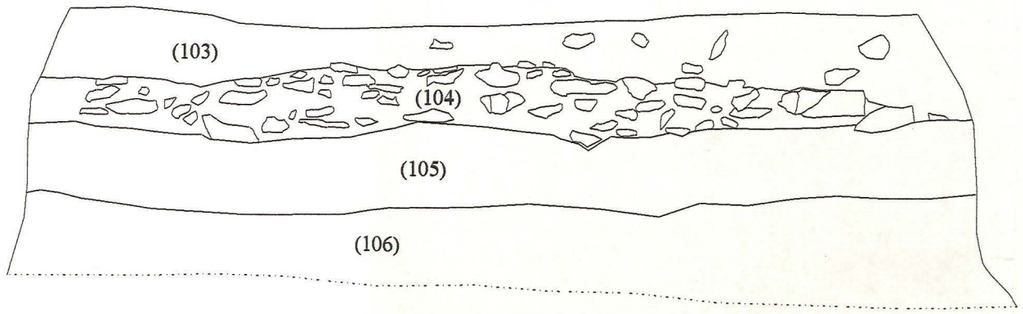

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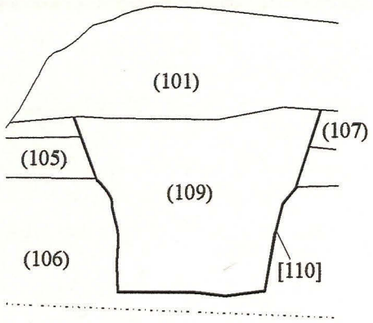

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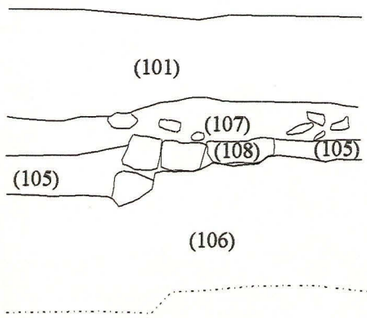

Section 13

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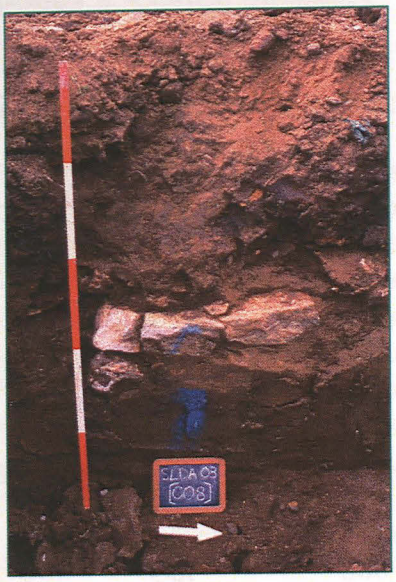
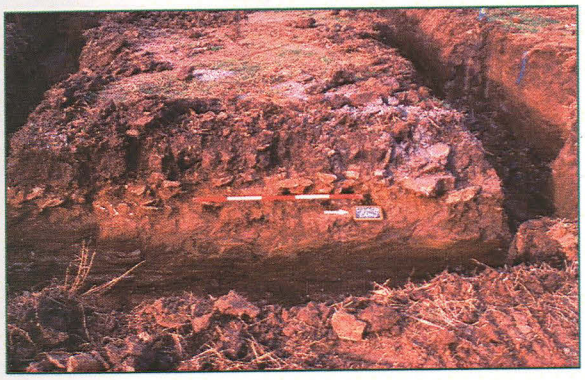
Scale 1:20

Fig 5: Sections 5-13 all at scale 1:20.

Appendix 1: Colour Plates.



Pl. 1. Layer [108] section looking west.



Pl. 2. Ditch [104] section looking east.

Pl.3. Ditch [115] in section, looking south.

PL.4. Pit [010] section, looking west.

Appendix 2. Context Summary

Context	*Type*	*Description*
101	Layer	Topsoil in house plots 1,2,3
102	Layer	Natural in house plots 1,2,3
103	Layer	Topsoil in house plot 10
104	Structure	Stone surface in house plot 10
105	Layer	Grey layer below 104
106	Layer	Natural in house plots 10 and 9
107	Layer	Stony layer in south side of house plot 10
108	Structure	Possible wall in south west corner house plot 10
109	Fill	Fill of [110]
110	Cut	Vertical-sided cut south east corner.
111	Layer	Topsoil in house plot 10.
112	Cut	Subsoil in house plot 10.
114	Layer	Buried topsoil plot 8
115	Cut	Ditch cut plot 8
116	Fill	Fill of cut 115