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**EASTBECK FARM,  
STANTON BY LANGWORTH, LINCOLNSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
WATCHING BRIEF REPORT**

Site code	EFS 05
NGR:	TF 0670 7798
LCCM Acc No:	2005.89
Planning ref.	M04/P/0570

Report prepared for Annakin Farms Ltd.

by

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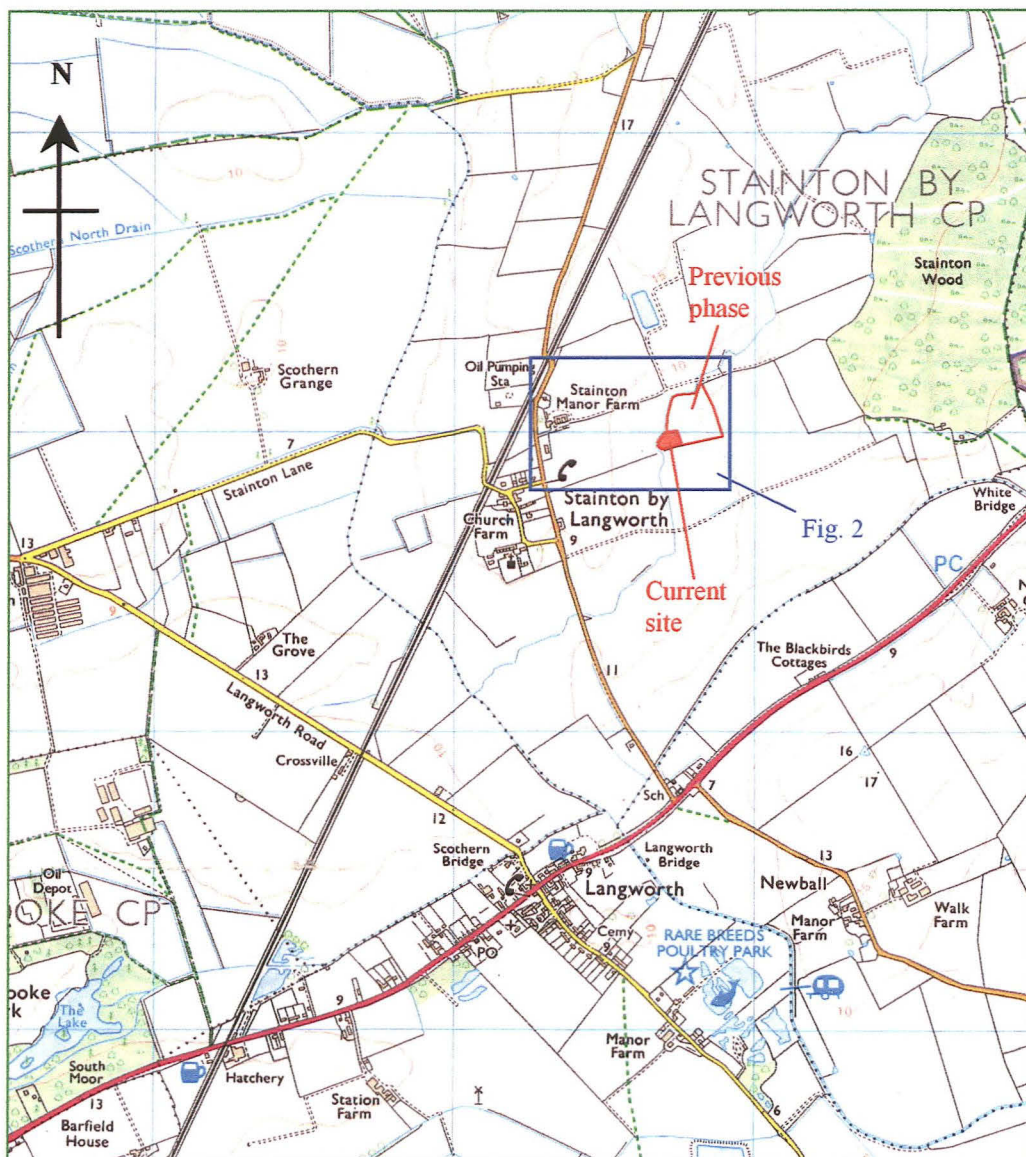
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## Summary

- A programme of archaeological observation and recording took place during the construction of a residential property adjacent to a new poultry unit north of the A158 at Stainton by Langworth, Lincolnshire.
- A similar watching brief had been carried out during the construction of the poultry unit, without result.
- No archaeological remains were exposed during the course of this watching brief, despite the proximity of cropmarks and other settlement evidence listed by the Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record.



**Figure 1:** General location map at scale 1:25 000. The present development site is shown in red, and the area detailed in figure 2 is outlined in blue.  
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## 1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) was commissioned by Annakin Farms Ltd. to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the construction of a single house adjacent to a range of new poultry units at Stainton by Langworth in Lincolnshire; a similar watching brief had already been undertaken on the poultry units themselves. These projects fulfilled the objectives of an agreed archaeological mitigation strategy that was based on the recommendations of Lincolnshire County Council, and compliant 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 Excavations*, IFA (1994) and the LCC document *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: A Manual of Archaeological Practice*, 1998.

## 2.0 Site location and description (figs. 1 and 2)

Stainton by Langworth is in the administrative district of West Lindsey, approximately 9km north-east of central Lincoln and 13km south-east of Market Rasen, and lies near the edge of the peat fenland at the foot of the eastern slope of the Lincoln Edge limestone ridge.

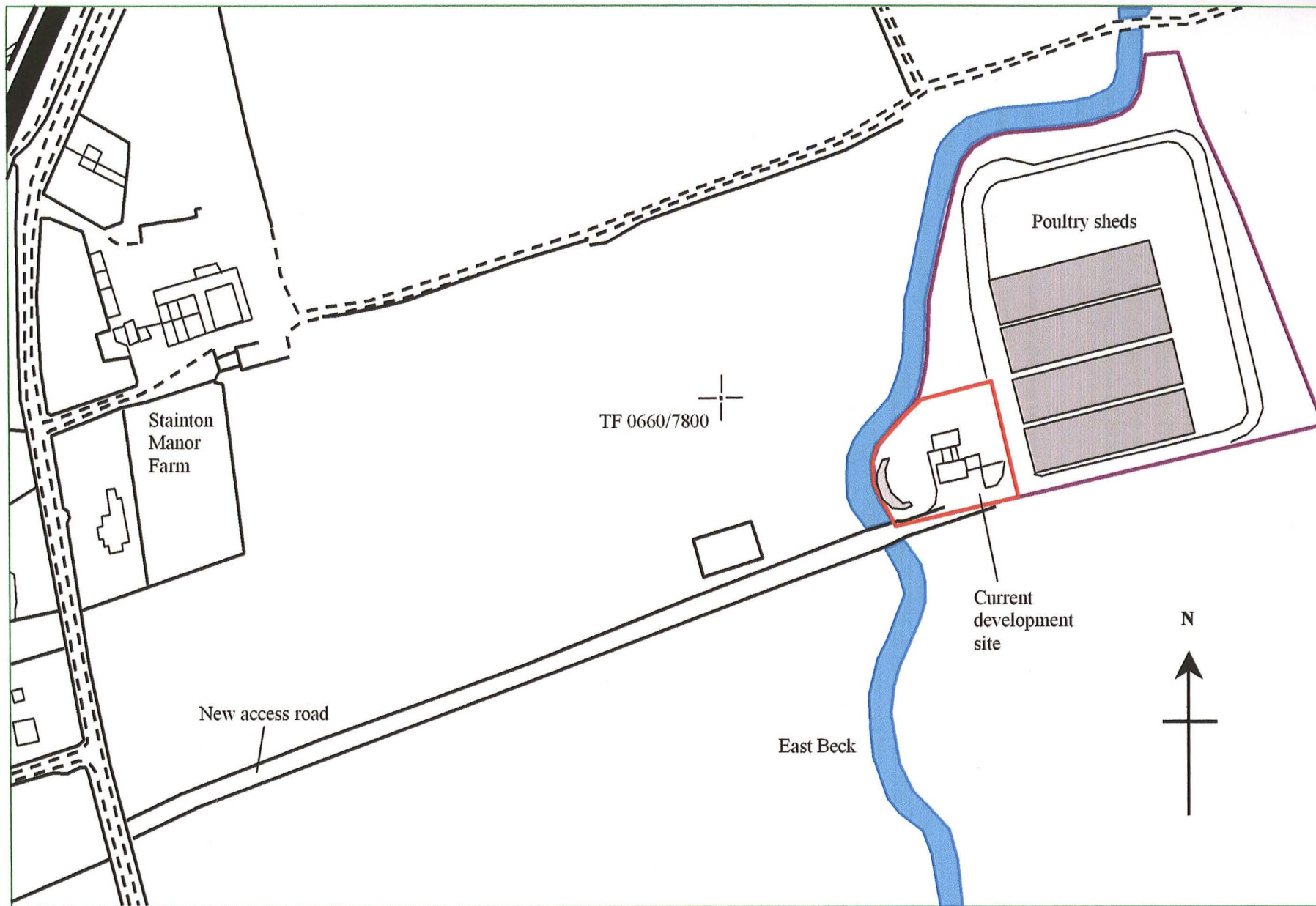
The development site is approximately 500m east of Stainton by Langworth village, and lies on the eastern bank of the eponymous East Beck, which skirts the village and flows into the Barlings Eau. The development area as a whole is roughly triangular, with the present site occupying the westerly point: the remainder of the area, outlined red in fig. 1, has already been developed with a series of poultry sheds. Prior to development, the site was under cultivation, and it continues to be surrounded by arable fields. The land slopes slightly down towards the east from the village.

The local drift geology consists of river terrace deposits of loam, sand and gravel – the site lies on one branch of a pattern of such river channel deposits intersecting the locally ubiquitous Wragby Till – overlying the solid Oxford Clay Formation mudstone (BGS, 1999).

Central National Grid Reference: TF 0670 7798.

## 3.0 Planning background

Planning permission was granted for the erection of a single detached dwelling, in association with a range of poultry units previously constructed (planning reference number M04/P/0570). This permission was subject to conditions including the provision of an archaeological watching brief during the construction groundworks.



**Figure 2:** Site location plan at scale 1:2500, after a plan supplied by the developer. The current development site is outlined in red, and the previously completed watching brief in purple.

#### 4.0 Archaeological and historical background

The earliest evidence of human activity known to the Lincolnshire Sites and Monuments Record in this area is the presence of worked flints from the Mesolithic and Neolithic (Middle and Late Stone Age) periods: these are recorded as isolated finds only, and are not associated with any known monuments or earth archaeology. The Historic Environment Record (HER) records undated cropmark ring ditches to the south of the site, which have tentatively been identified as Bronze Age; a single socketed axe, found to the south of Stainton village, can definitely be ascribed to this period.

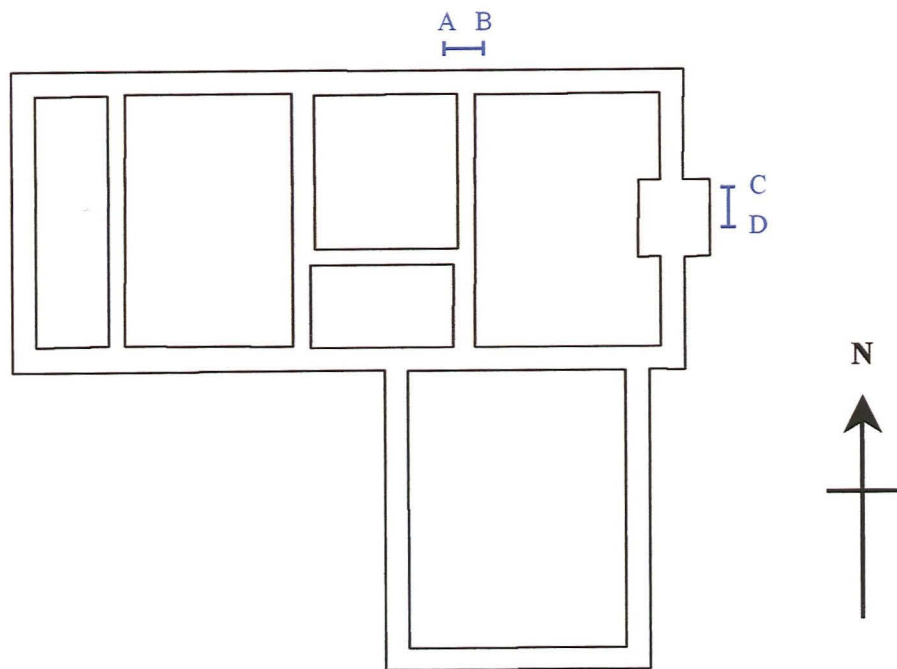
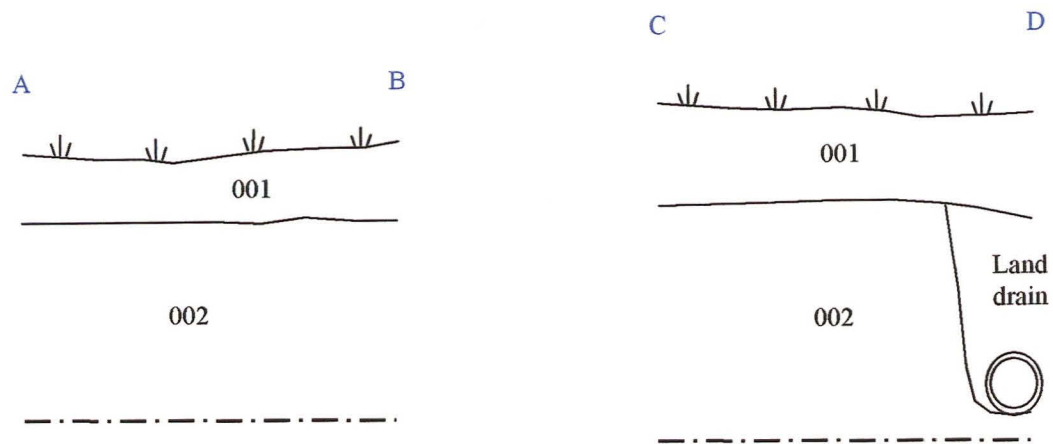
There is more extensive evidence of activity in this area during the Roman occupation: the HER records individual finds of pottery scatters and coins, as well as a Roman stone coffin to the north of the village (Brett, 2003), while quantities of Roman building material, including the box flue tiles associated with hypocaust heating systems, indicate the possible presence of a high-status building, such as a villa, c. 1km to the east. The village lies approximately 1km to the north of the modern A158, which follows the line of a major Roman road out of Lincoln: this road forked in the vicinity of Langworth, with one branch running north-east over the Wolds to the coast and the other south-east over the southern Wolds towards Burghle-Marsh (Whitwell, 1992).

The place-name 'Stainton' first appearing in the Domesday Survey of AD 1086 is a partial Scandinavianisation of an original Old English form meaning 'the farmstead or village in a stony place'. Three villages in Lindsey have the element 'Stainton' in their names, and all adjoin a Roman road or a prehistoric trackway: it is possible that the 'stone' element here refers to the metalling of the road (Cameron, 1998).

Domesday Book lists Stainton by Langworth as a single manorial holding belonging to Count Alan: it comprised 3 carucates (some 360 acres) of arable land, of which, unusually, half a carucate was owned by the free men employed on Count Alan's estate; 80 acres of meadow grazing, and 140 of 'scrubland'. No church is mentioned, but the settlement had a mill with a taxable value of 12 pence (Martin and Williams, 1992).

Cropmarks interpreted as medieval settlement remains are also recorded in the vicinity of Stainton, and the village contains the remains of a medieval stone cross (Brett, 2003), but little is currently known about medieval Stainton: for much of this period, its records were conjoined with those of Reasby, East Langwith and Newball.

In 1996, an archaeological field evaluation was undertaken within the village, on the east side of Scothern Lane, approximately 400m south-west of the current site. This exposed mainly ground-raising deposits and features of later post-medieval date; a small assemblage of late medieval pottery was recovered (Johnson, 1996). An archaeological watching brief was carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) on the area to the north-east of the present site, during a previous phase of development: the groundworks for the poultry sheds consisted of a topsoil strip only, with no requirement for foundation trenches, and no archaeological features were seen (Brett, 2003).



**Figure 3:** Sample sections at scale 1:20, with a sketch location plan of the foundation trenches at 1:200.

## **5.0 Methodology**

The groundworks for the current development took place on April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2005. Prior to the commencement of the watching brief, the site had been cleared of a partial covering of hardcore, and the upper ground surface, which had been reduced to liquid mud by heavy rain, had been scraped off: the topsoil layer had nowhere been completely removed.

Machining was carried out using a wheeled 180° excavator, fitted with a range of toothed buckets, as a toothless ditching bucket could not penetrate the rubble-filled topsoil layer. The external wall trenches were 0.60m wide, and a narrower bucket was used to excavate the 0.45m wide internal wall trenches; all foundation trenches were generally between 0.80 and 0.90m deep, and could safely be entered. The ground surface was partially flooded, and excavation conditions in general very wet: surface water was draining into the trenches and groundwater running into them.

The sections and bases of the foundation trenches were closely observed, and cleaned by hand where the presence of an archaeological feature seemed possible. All contexts seen were described on standard watching brief recording sheets; sample sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20, and located on a 1:200 sketch plan of the works. A colour slide record was also maintained (appendix 1).

The watching brief was completed on the same day, and was carried out by the author.

## **6.0 Results**

The foundation trenches were sealed by a layer of compact dark grey sandy clay, on average 0.20m thick, containing gravel, limestone rubble and hardcore. This layer, 001, appeared to be the remains of topsoil, heavily disturbed by the movement of plant and agricultural vehicles and recently partially covered by hard-standing.

Below topsoil 001 was layer 002, a friable to loose coarse sand of variable colour, with flint gravel inclusions: the natural drift geology. This deposit was cut by several field drains containing earthenware pipes, but no archaeological deposits or features were seen, and no artefactual material was recovered.

## **7.0 Discussion and conclusions**

Despite the known occurrence of Romano-British, medieval and possibly prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the site, no archaeological deposits were exposed during the course of this watching brief. It is possible that Eastbeck Farm lies outside a traditionally recognised boundary formed by the East Beck, which divides it from the village, and so was never a focus of activity in the Middle Ages, while the slightly lower-lying land adjacent to the Beck may simply not have been desirable territory before more extensive medieval settlement, particularly of ecclesiastical estates, brought the first regional drainage programmes.



## 8.0 Effectiveness of methodology

The methodology chosen for this project was adequate to the purpose of determining the presence or absence of archaeological deposits in an area where the likelihood of such deposits had already been shown to be limited; sufficient time had been allowed to record such deposits, had they been present.

## 9.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank Annakin Farms Ltd. for this commission, and Mr. D. Annakin for his co-operation during the watching brief.

## 10.0 References

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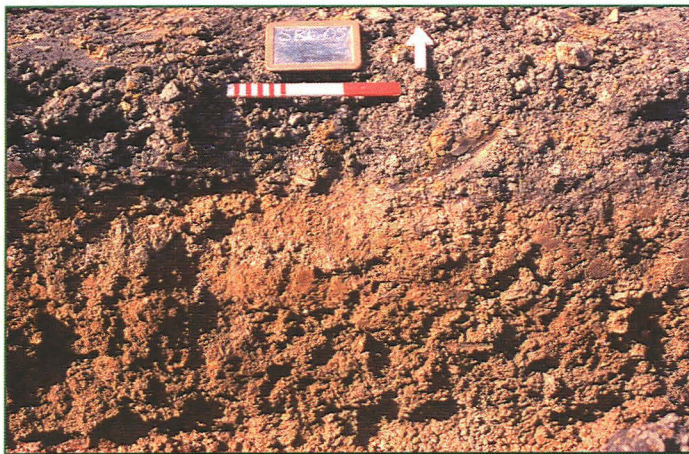
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## 11.0 Site archive

The site archive is expected to be deposited at the Lincoln City and County Museum within six months of the completion of this report. Access can be gained to it by quoting the LCCM accession number 2005.89.

## Appendix 1: Colour Plates

**Plate 1 (right):** General site shot during machining, looking north-west from the position of the poultry houses already constructed.



**Plate 2 (left):** Sample section 1 in foundation trench (shown as A-B in site drawings), looking north.



**Plate 3 (right):** Sample section 2 in foundation trench (shown as C-D in site drawings), looking east.



**Plate 4 (left):** General site shot on completion of the foundation trench excavations, looking south-east (the previously completed poultry houses are on the left of the picture).

## **Appendix 2: List of contexts**

- 001** Remnant topsoil: compact dark grey sandy clay with gravel, limestone rubble and hardcore.
- 002** Natural deposit: friable to loose coarse sand with flint gravel; colour varying from light greyish-yellow to light orange-brown.