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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING**  
**ON LAND OFF GREEN LANE,**  
**JEKIL'S BANK,**  
**HOLBEACH ST. JOHNS**  
**LINCOLNSHIRE**  
(HGL 06)  
Planning reference: H06/0873/05



**A P S**  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
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SERVICES

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13/10/06  
J. Wall*

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CU11478

Quality Control  
Green Lane, Jekil's Bank,  
Holbeach St Johns, Lincolnshire  
(HGL 06)

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING  
ON LAND OFF GREEN LANE,  
JEKIL'S BANK,  
HOLBEACH ST. JOHNS  
LINCOLNSHIRE**

Project Co-ordinator: Mark N Fordham  
Supervisor: Mark N Fordham  
Illustrator: Mark N Fordham  
Photographic Reproductions: Sue Duggan  
Post-press: Sue Duggan  
Planning reference: H06/0873/05

**Work Undertaken For  
Mr & Mrs N Fordham**

January 2006

Report Compiled by  
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National Grid Reference: TF 37111 18813  
City and County Museum Accession No: 2006.13

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT SERVICES**



APS Report No. 15/06

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Green Lane, Jekil's Bank,  
Holbeach St. Johns, Lincolnshire  
(HGL 06)**

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Checked by Project Manager	Approved by Senior Archaeologist
Mark Williams <i>Mark Williams</i>	<i>[Signature]</i> Tom Lane
Date: 7-02-06	Date: 1-02-06

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## 1. SUMMARY

*Archaeological recording was undertaken during groundworks on land at The Paddocks, Green Lane, Jekil's Bank, Holbeach St Johns, Lincolnshire. The recording monitored the removal of topsoil within the area of a proposed new wildlife pond.*

*The development site is situated within an area in which occur several cropmark sites of undated enclosures, ditches and the lines of possible former watercourses. Some or all of these features may be Romano-British in origin.*

*The archaeological recording revealed the line of an undated ditch, which may be associated with the nearby cropmarks. A modern field drain was also identified.*

*No artefacts were retrieved during these investigations.*

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services (APS) was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Fordham to undertake archaeological recording during groundworks associated with the creation of a wildlife pond within a new conservation/amenity area on land at The Paddocks, Green Lane, Jekil's Bank, Holbeach St Johns, Lincolnshire. Approval for the development was sought through the submission of a planning application to South Holland District Council (Planning reference H06/0873/05). Planning permission has been granted for this scheme subject to archaeological conditions (Condition Nos. 5 and 6), which require the undertaking of archaeological recording and an EDM survey during groundworks associated with the construction stage of development. The archaeological

recording was carried out between the 23<sup>rd</sup> and the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2006.

### 2.3 Topography and Geology

Holbeach St Johns lies approximately 6km to the south of Holbeach and 10km to the south-east of Spalding in the administrative district of South Holland, county of Lincolnshire (Figs 1 and 2).

The development site is situated approximately 2km to the east of the hamlet of Holbeach St Johns, but within the parish of Gedney, on typically flat and low-lying fenland to the south-east of Green Lane at National Grid Reference TF 37111 18813, and at a height of approximately 3m AOD (Fig. 2).

The local soils are of the Wallasea 2 Association, typically pelo-alluvial gley soils that have developed on reclaimed marine alluvium (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 338). This alluvium in turn seals a solid geology of Upper Jurassic clays (BGS, 1992).

### 2.4 Archaeological Setting

William Stukeley, the noted 18<sup>th</sup> century Lincolnshire antiquary records in his *Itinerarium Curiosum* of 1724 that many Roman coins were found when the drainage ditch at Gigglesburn was dug (HER 22274). The exact location of this hoard is uncertain though it may be in the vicinity of Jekyll's Farm and Jiggle's Gate (Hallam, 1970).

Holbeach is documented in the Domesday Survey of AD1086 as *Holobec* and *Holobech*. Later medieval documentary references variously detail *Holebec* (AD1160-70), *Holebeche* (AD1170) and *Holebech* (cAD1331). The place name is derived from the Old English *hol* or hollow and *baec* or brook, thus denoting a topographical derivation re a hollow or deep brook.

The area of Holbeach St John remained as unoccupied fen until a succession of fen banks were constructed in the medieval period to act as flood defences; Jekil's Bank and the Old Fen Dike are just two such examples of this.

Holbeach St Johns became a separate ecclesiastical parish in 1867, as distinctive from the remainder of other such parishes within Holbeach. The hamlet of Holbeach St Johns grew up around the chapel of St John the Baptist. This is a Neo-Gothic building of brick comprising a nave and a short chancel, constructed between 1839-40 to designs by Robert Ellis (Pevsner, 1989). The hamlet developed on a drove road on which cattle were driven to the fen.

The Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record (HER) notes a number of undated cropmark sites in the vicinity of the development site. To the northwest and on the other side of Green Lane occur several cropmarks comprising possible enclosures, linear features and former watercourses (HER 20468). These are undated though may be Romano-British in origin. North of these features are cropmarks which may denote the lines of other undated ditches and watercourses (HER 20469).

North of Green Lane and the development site are further cropmarks that may similarly mark the location of former ditches or watercourses (HER 20470). To the north east of the development site are cropmarks of linear features or possible ditches and former watercourses that may be Romano-British in origin, though are undated (HER 20471).

### 3. AIMS

The aim of the archaeological recording was to ensure that any archaeological features and/or deposits exposed during the groundworks should be recorded and,

if present, to determine their date, function and origin.

### 4. METHODS

The archaeological recording involved the close and continual monitoring of the mechanical removal of topsoil within the area of the proposed new wildlife pond (Fig. 3). The topsoil strip was undertaken in two stages. The initial strip comprised the removal of topsoil down to an average depth of approximately 100-150mm. During this process a total of fourteen trial pits were also excavated to deeper levels to ascertain the depth of the underlying natural clays. Only one of these trial pits (No. 4, Figs. 3 and 5, Plate 1) contained archaeological deposits. This was followed by a second strip of the site, which involved the removal of the remainder of the topsoil and the upper levels of the underlying subsoil/natural clays to depths of a further 200-400mm.

Selected deposits were then hand excavated further in order to retrieve artefactual material and to determine their function. Each identified deposit was allocated a unique reference number or context number with an individual written description. All contexts and their descriptions appear as Appendix 1. A photographic record was compiled and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10 and plans at scales of 1:50 and 1:1,000. Recording was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services practice.

The records were also checked and a stratigraphic matrix produced. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them.

As only one undated linear feature and a modern field drain were identified by these investigations, the EDM survey was deemed to be subsequently unnecessary



following agreement with the Built Environment Officer of Lincolnshire County Council.

## 5. RESULTS

Following post-excavation analysis three phases were identified:

Phase 1	Natural deposits
Phase 2	Undated deposits
Phase 3	Modern deposits

Archaeological contexts are listed below and described. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

### Phase 1 Natural deposits

The underlying natural subsoil deposits over the site comprised (002), a soft mid grey-brown silty clay. This deposit was observed to depths of up to 500mm, and contained frequent pockets of ferrous salts leached from the overlying topsoil (001). (002) also became progressively more gleyed with depth.

### Phase 2 Undated deposits

Cut into the subsoil (002) was the linear cut [005]. This ditch was mostly orientated from south to north (Plates 8-9), but towards the northern area of the pond turned to the northwest (Fig. 3, Plate 11). Two sections were excavated into this feature within the western area of the pond (Figs. 4 and 6, Sections 3A-D, Plates 4-7). The width of this cut varied between 0.8 to 1.1m, but widened to 1.5m to the northwest. Its depth varies between 0.35-0.46m, while the length was approximately 40m. The sides of the ditch sloped at an angle of approximately 45° extending into a gently curving and rounded base. Its single fill comprised (006), a soft dark grey silty clay with no observed inclusions. No finds were retrieved from this deposit.

### Phase 3 Modern deposits

Also cut into the natural subsoils (002) was the linear ditch cut [003]. This feature was visible on the ground by differential grass/weed growth, and was orientated from north-northwest to south-south-east. It was recorded in section within trial pit number 4 (Figs. 3, and 5, Section 2, Plate 1). This ditch was 1.8m in width and 0.56m in depth. Its sides were generally gently sloping and extended onto a curved base. Its single fill (004) was a soft dark brown silty clay with occasional brick/tile and charcoal flecking. It became progressively more humic towards the base of the ditch cut. No finds were retrieved from this deposit.

Overlying the natural subsoils (002) and the ditch cuts [003] and [005] was the topsoil (001). This was a soft dark brown silty clay of up to 300mm in thickness with very occasional charcoal and brick/tile flecking.

## 6. DISCUSSION

The monitoring of the topsoil removal identified the line of a modern field drain within one of the trial pits. This was one of a number of such parallel land drainage features that crossed the vicinity of the development site from northwest to the southeast.

A second linear feature was also located that generally traversed the site from south to north, though to the northeast turned to the northwest. Despite two sections excavated into this ditch to retrieve artefactual dating evidence, no such finds were made.

## 7. CONCLUSION

An archaeological recording brief was carried out during groundworks associated

with the creation of a new wildlife pond as the development site is situated within an area of known undated and possible Romano-British cropmark sites.

These cropmarks comprise possible ditches, enclosures and watercourses. The line of an undated ditch, which may be associated with this complex, was identified by the recording brief, and which perhaps may mark the location of an enclosure.

The line of a modern field drain, which was visible on the ground, was also recorded.

No finds were retrieved.

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wish to acknowledge the assistance of Mr and Mrs Fordham who commissioned the fieldwork and the post excavation analysis. Thanks are also extended to Mr Mark Bennet of the Lincolnshire Heritage Record for supplying background information.

## 9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Mark Williams  
 Site Supervisor: Neville Hall  
 Finds processing: Denise Buckley  
 Photographic reproduction: Susan Unsworth  
 Illustration: Neville Hall  
 Post-excavation analysis: Neville Hall

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## 11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services  
 DoE Department of the Environment  
 GSGB Geological Survey of Great Britain  
 HER – Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record  
 IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

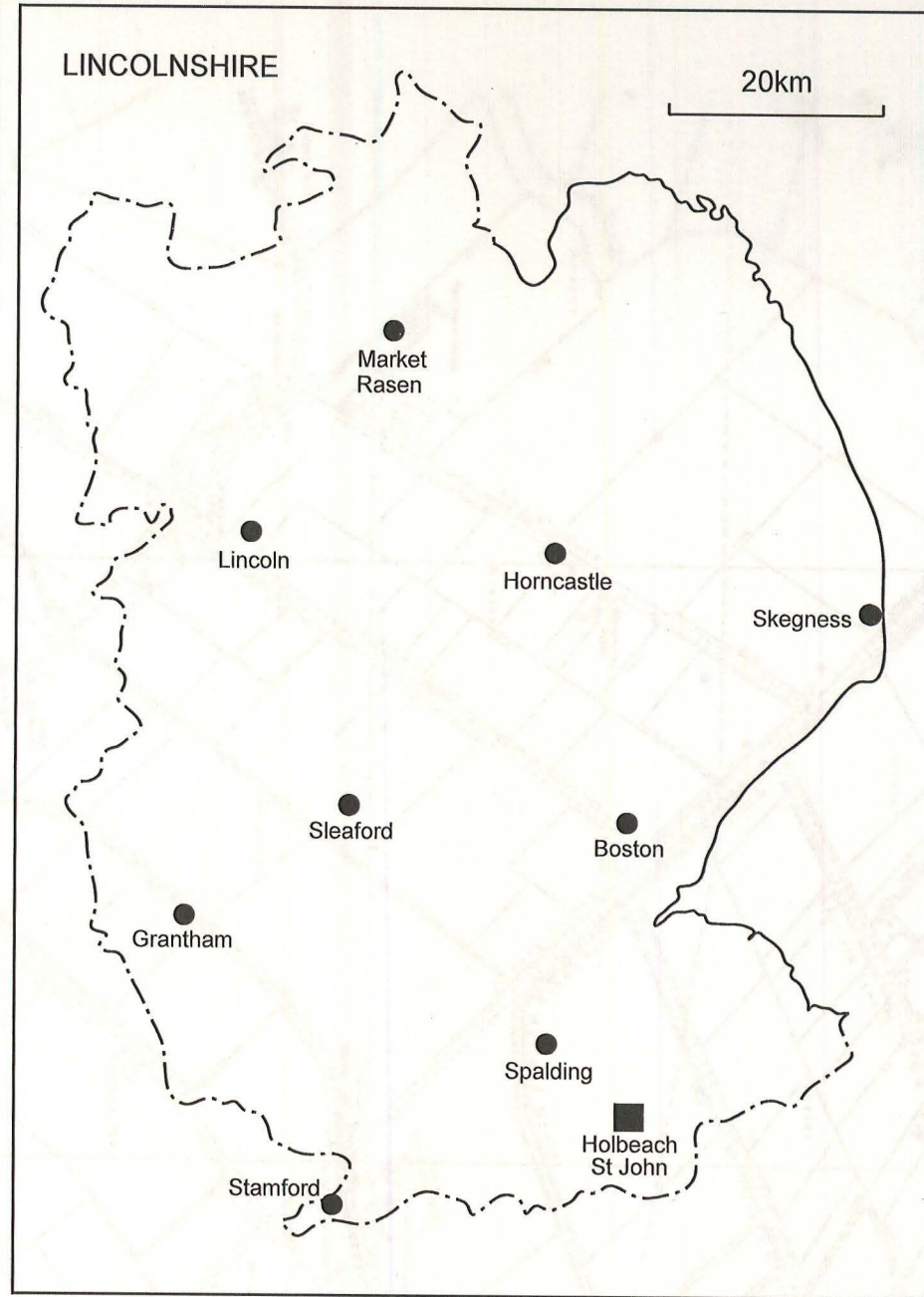
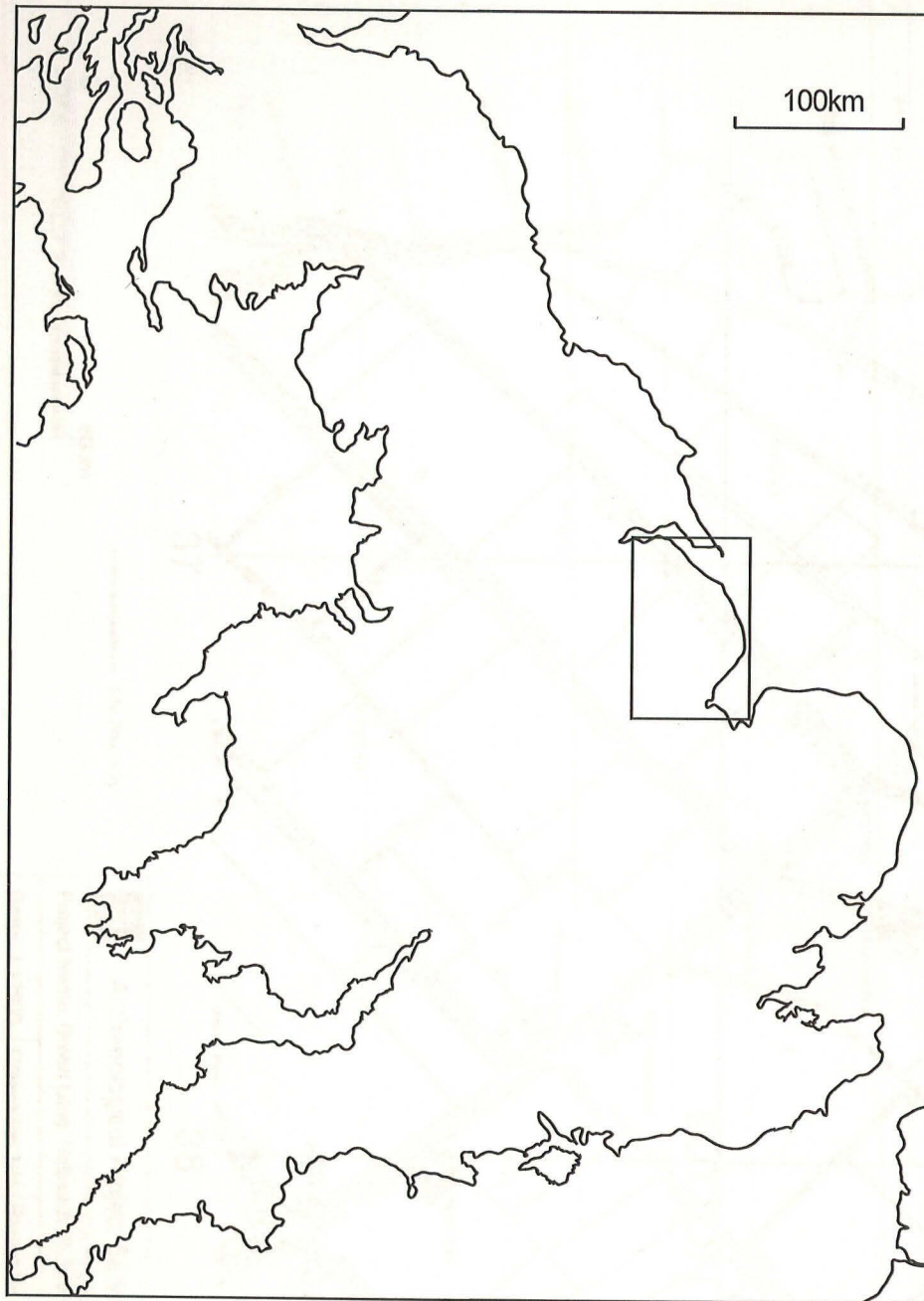


Figure 1 General location plan

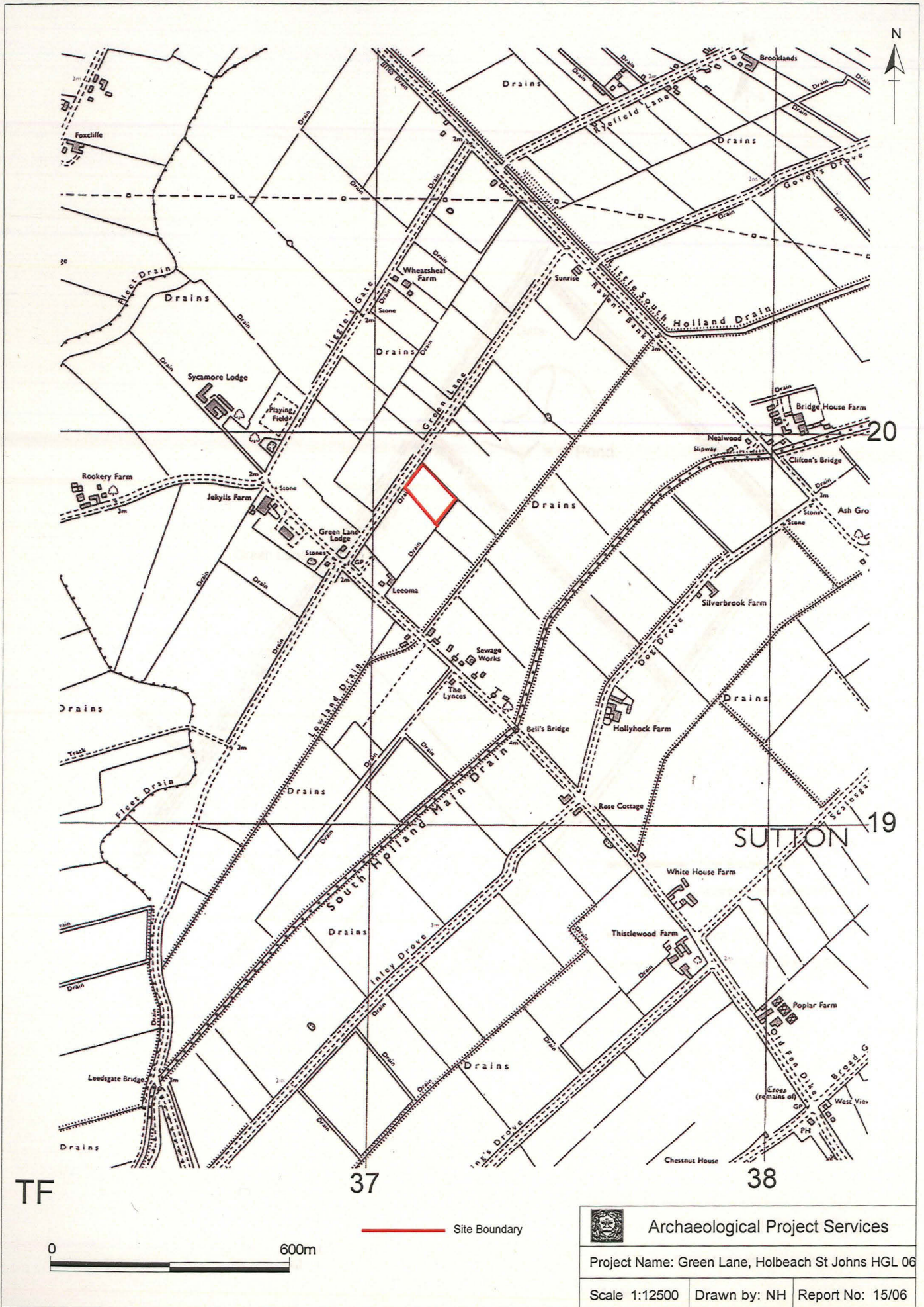
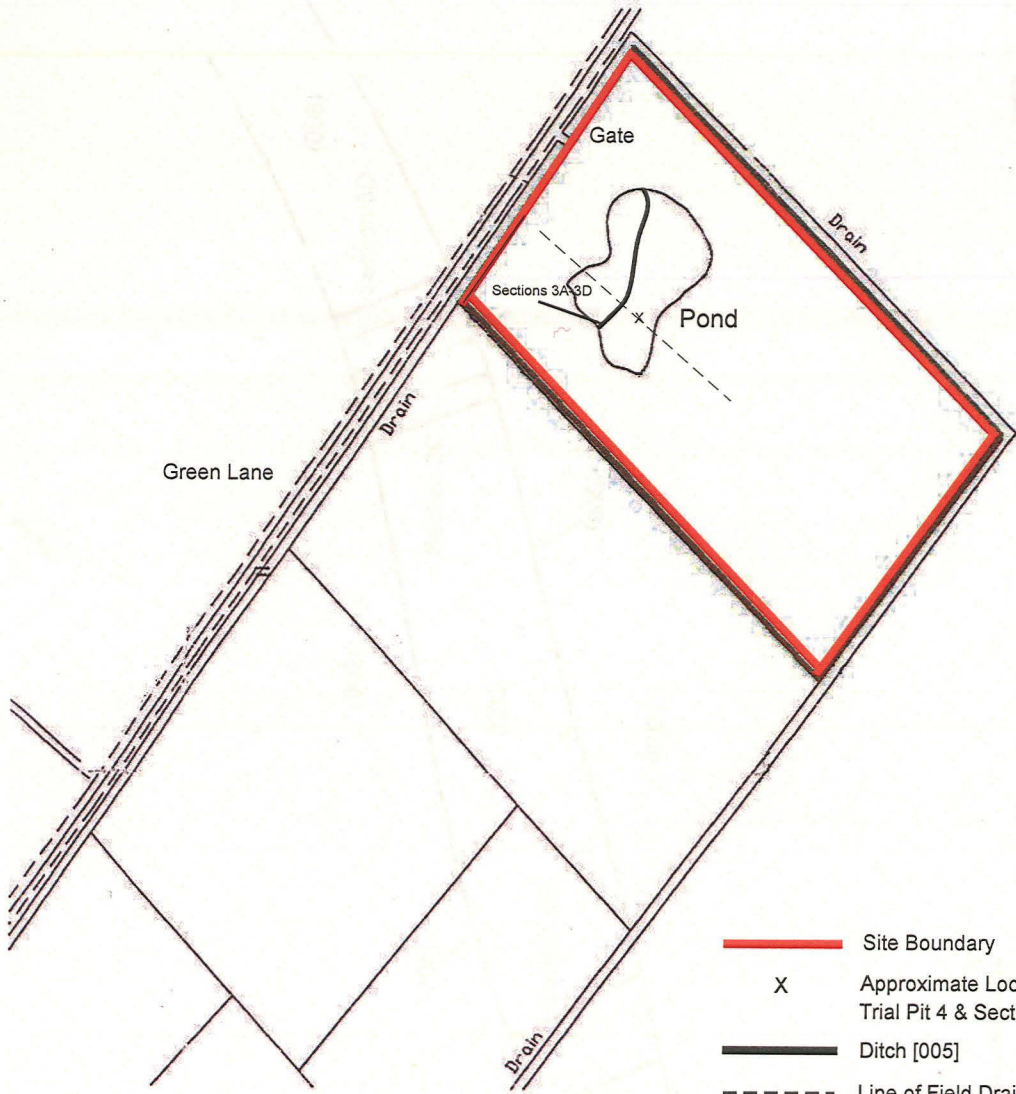






Figure 2 Site location



-  Site Boundary
-  Approximate Location of Trial Pit 4 & Sections 1 & 2
-  Ditch [005]
-  Line of Field Drain [003]




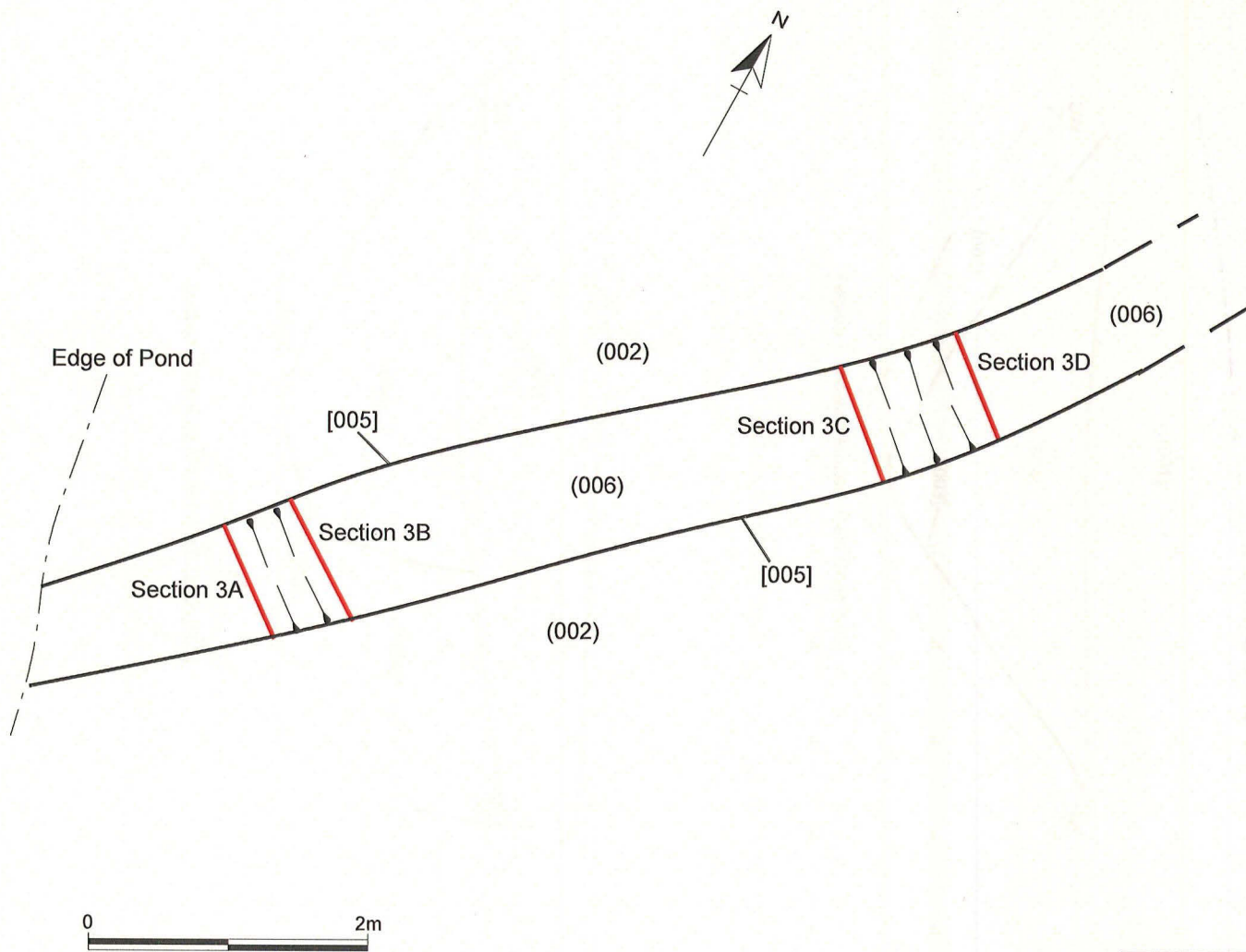
 Archaeological Project Services		
Project Name: Green Lane, Holbeach St Johns HGL 06		
Scale 1:2,000	Drawn by: NH	Report No: 15/06

Figure 3 Site location showing line of ditch [005]




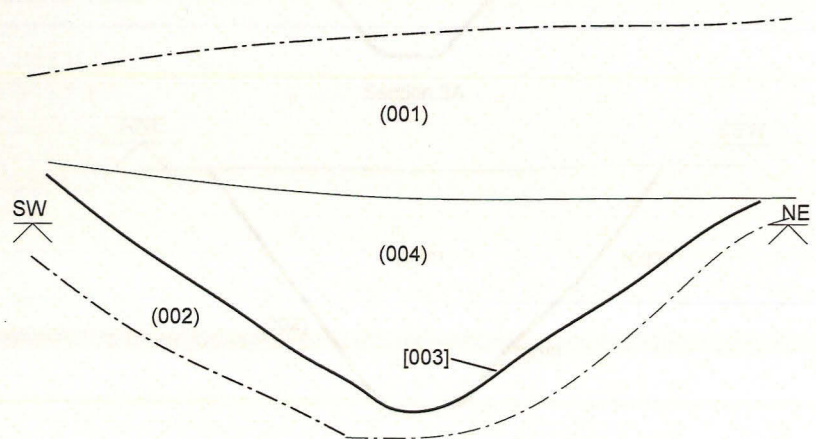
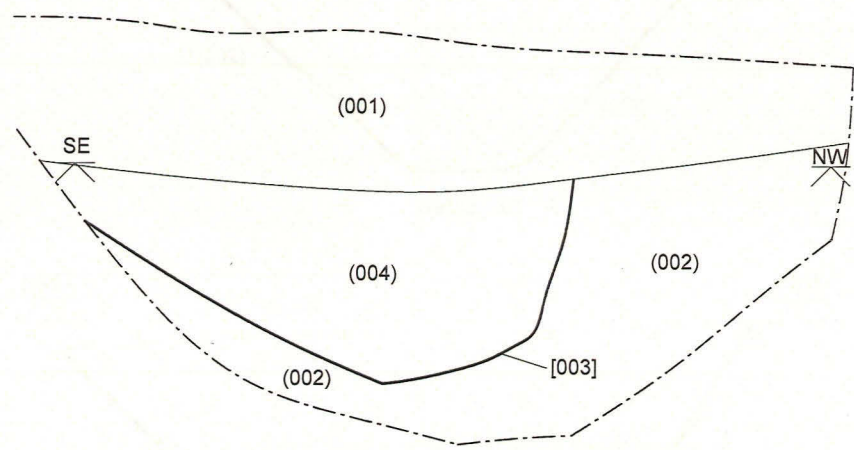
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Project Name: Green Lane, Holbeach St Johns HGL 06		
Scale 1:50	Drawn by: NH	Report No: 15/06/04

Figure 4 Plan of undated ditch [005]



Section 1 Showing Modern Field Drain [003]



Section 2 Showing Modern Field Drain [003]




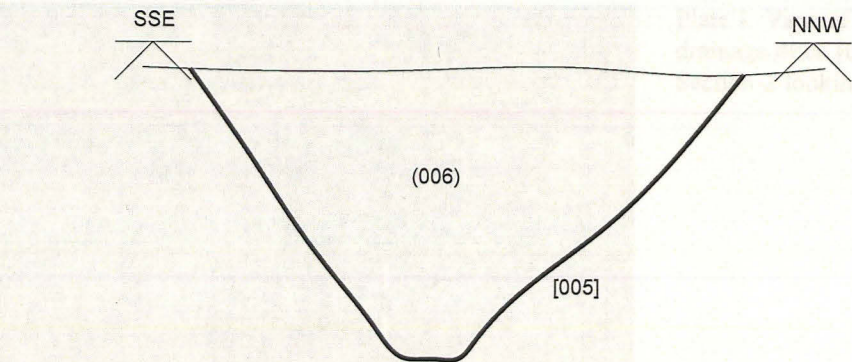
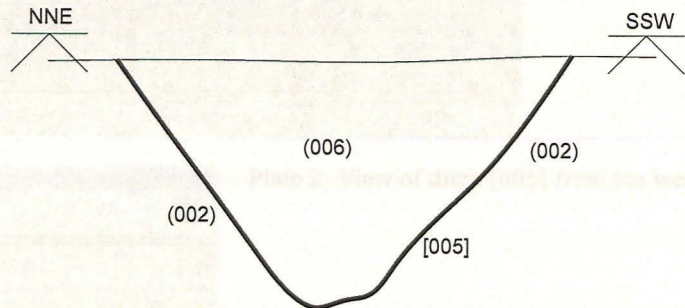
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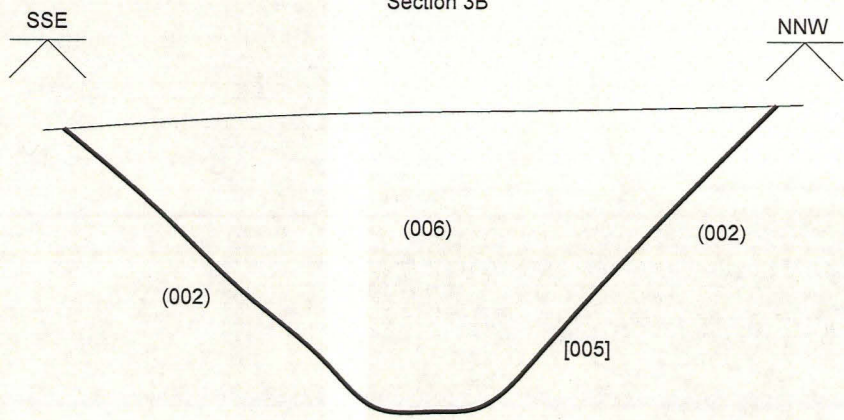
Figure 5 Sections 1 and 2



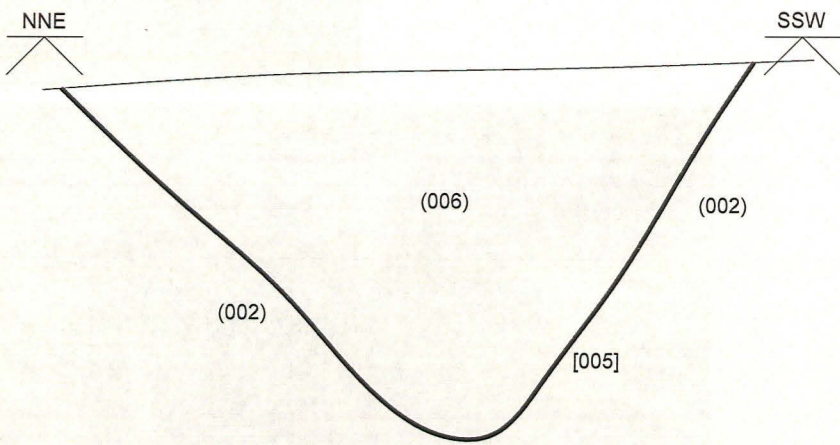
Section 3A



Section 3B



Section 3C



Section 3D




 <b>Archaeological Project Services</b>		
Project Name: Green Lane, Holbeach St Johns, HGL 06		
Scale 1:10	Drawn by: NH	Report No: 15/06

Figure 6 Sections 3A-3D





Plate 1 View of modern drainage ditch [003] with Section 2 looking south-west



Plate 2 View of ditch [005] from the west



Plate 3 General working shot

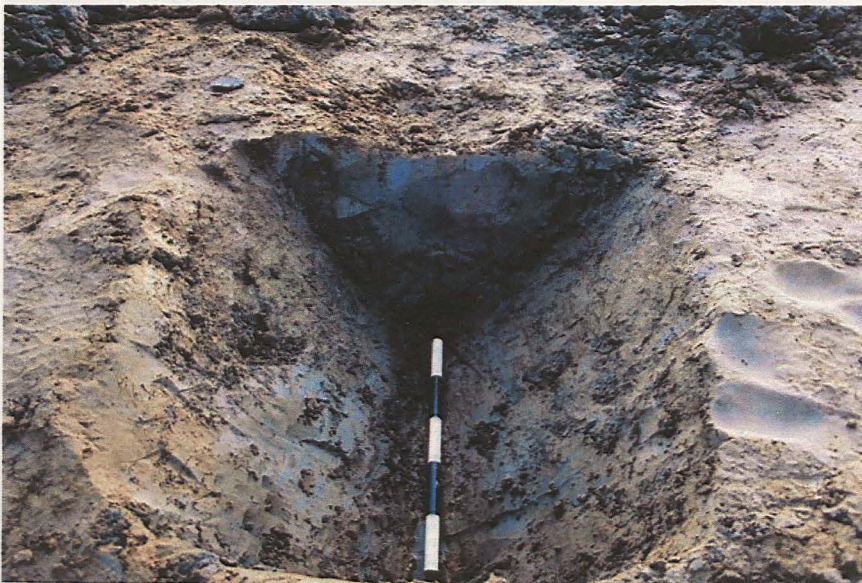


Plate 4 View of Section 3A, ditch [005]



Plate 5 View of Section  
3B, ditch [005]

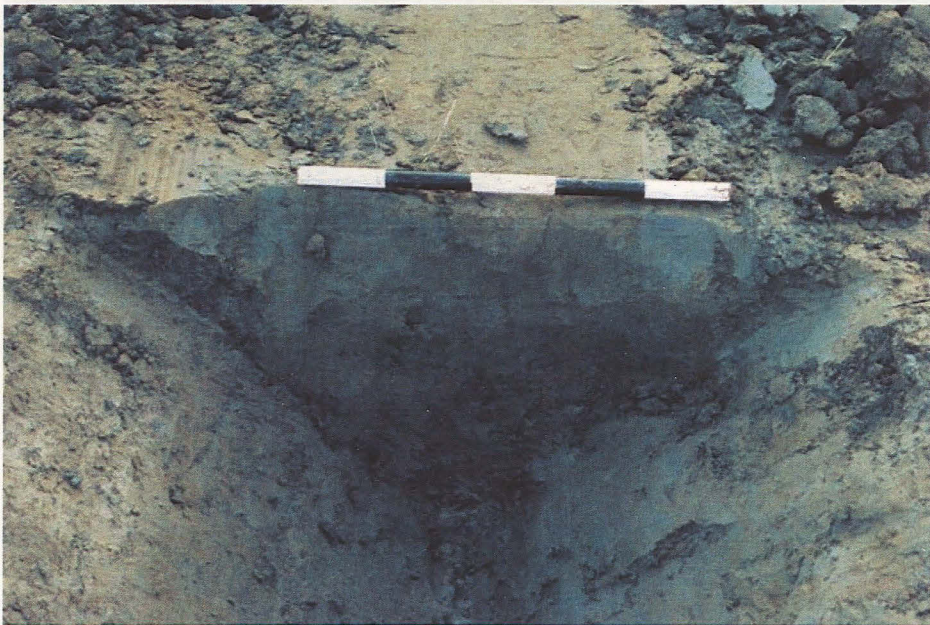


Plate 6 View of Section  
3C, ditch [005]

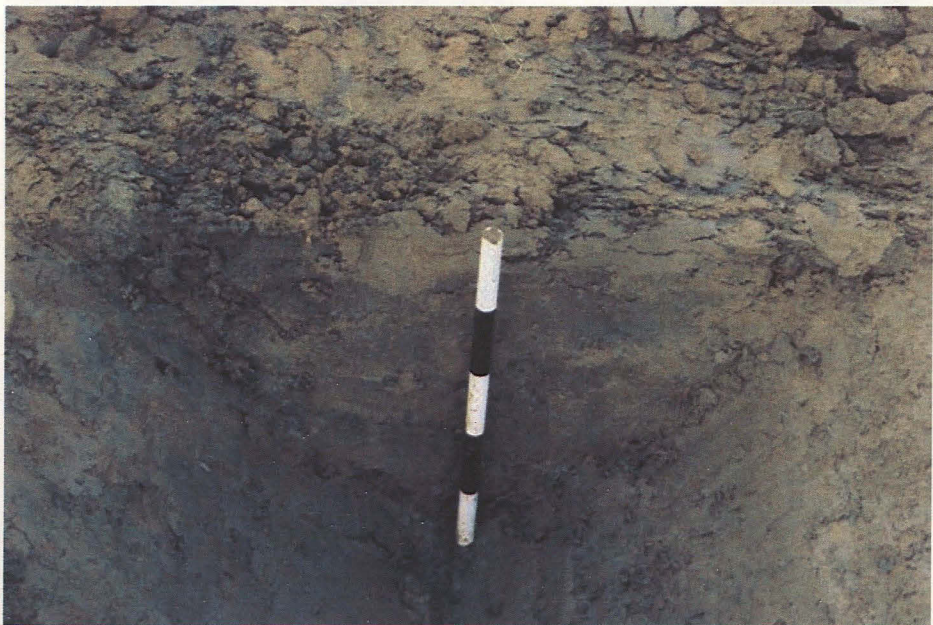


Plate 7 View of Section  
3D, ditch [005]



Plate 8 View of ditch [005] to the west of the central island of the pond, looking east



Plate 9 View of ditch [005] to the east of the central island, looking west



Plate 10 General working shot

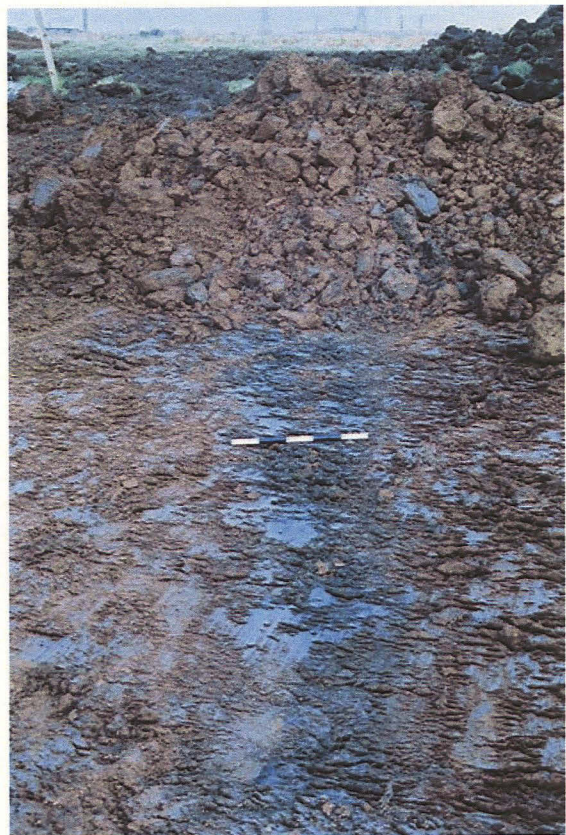


Plate 11 View of ditch [005] showing turn to the north west

## Appendix 1

### CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Description	Dimensions	Interpretation
001	Dark brown silty clay with very occasional charcoal & cbm flecking.	Up to 300mm in thickness	Topsoil
002	Mid grey brown silty clay.	Observed depths of up to 500mm	Natural subsoil
003	Linear cut, orientated NNW-SSE	Width – 1.8m; depth – 0.56m.	Modern field drain
004	Dark brown silty clay with occasional cbm & charcoal flecking. Progressively more humic towards base.	As above	Fill of cut [003]
005	Linear cut, orientated approx. N-S	Observed length c45m; width 0.8-1.5m, depth 0.35-0.46m	Undated drainage/field boundary ditch
006	Dark grey silty clay.	As above	Fill of cut [005]

## Appendix 2

### GLOSSARY

<b>Alluvium</b>	Deposits laid down by water. Marine alluvium is deposited by the sea, and fresh water alluvium is laid down by rivers and in lakes.
<b>Context</b>	An archaeological context represents a distinct archaeological event or process. For example, the action of digging a pit creates a context (the cut) as does the process of its subsequent backfill (the fill). Each context encountered during an archaeological investigation is allocated a unique number by the archaeologist and a record sheet detailing the description and interpretation of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, e.g. [004].
<b>Cropmark</b>	A mark that is produced by the effect of underlying archaeological or geological features influencing the growth of a particular crop.
<b>Cut</b>	A cut refers to the physical action of digging a posthole, pit, ditch, foundation trench, etc. Once the fills of these features are removed during an archaeological investigation the original 'cut' is therefore exposed and subsequently recorded.
<b>Domesday Survey</b>	A survey of property ownership in England compiled on the instruction of William I for taxation purposes in 1086 AD.
<b>Fill</b>	Once a feature has been dug it begins to silt up (either slowly or rapidly) or it can be back-filled manually. The soil(s) that become contained by the 'cut' are referred to as its fill(s).
<b>Layer</b>	A layer is a term used to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
<b>Medieval</b>	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
<b>Natural</b>	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity.

### Appendix 3

#### THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

- 6 context sheets
- 3 daily record sheets
- 2 photographic record sheets
- 1 plan record sheet
- 1 section record sheet
- 1 context record sheet
- 5 sheets of scale drawings incorporating plans & sections

All primary records are kept at:

Archaeological Project Services  
The Old School  
Cameron Street  
Heckington  
Sleaford  
Lincolnshire  
NG34 9RW

The ultimate destination of the project archive is: Lincoln City and County Museum.

Lincoln City and County Museum Accession Number:

Archaeological project Services Site Code: HGL 06

The discussion and comments provided in this report are based on the archaeology revealed during the site investigations. Other archaeological finds and features may exist on the development site but away from the areas exposed during the course of this fieldwork. *Archaeological Project Services* cannot confirm that those areas unexposed are free from archaeology nor that any archaeology present there is of a similar character to that revealed during the current investigation. Archaeological Project Services shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting in that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project Specification.