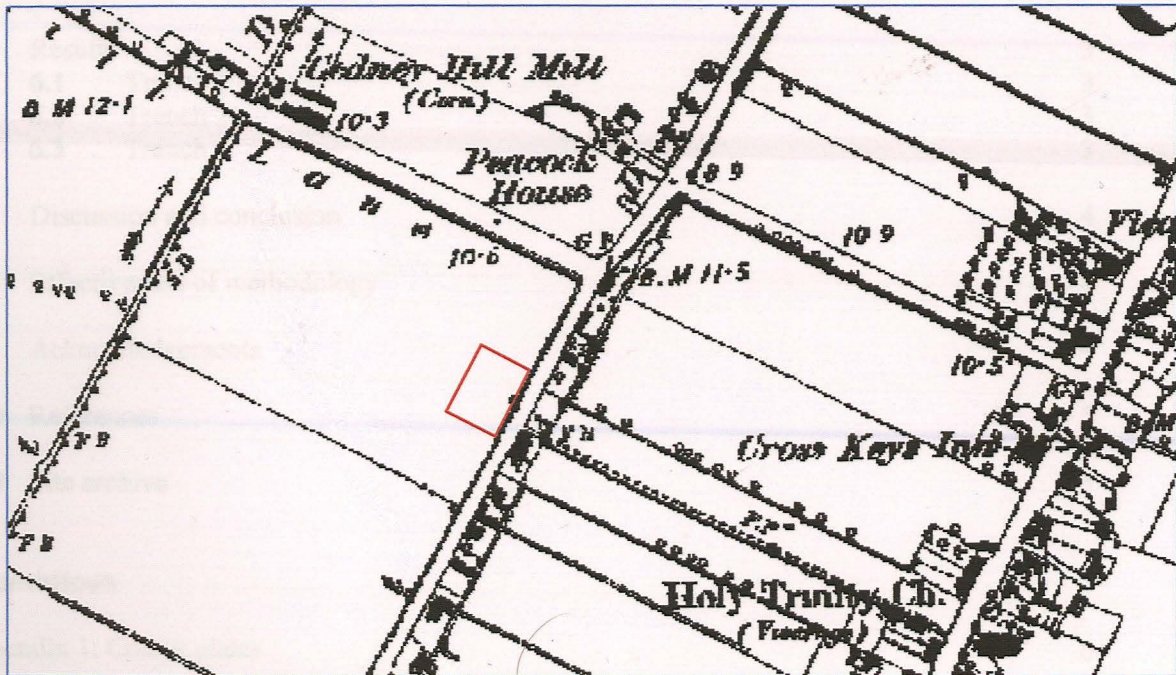


M811

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION BY TRIAL EXCAVATION:  
WEST DROVE, GEDNEY HILL, LINCOLNSHIRE**

Planning Reference: H07/1286/07  
LCCM Accession Number: 2008.3  
Site Code: GHWD 08  
NGR: TF 3354 1147



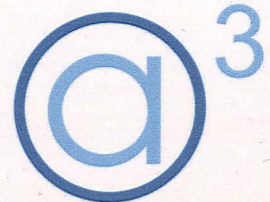
Report prepared for

G.R Merchant Ltd  
On behalf of  
Mr S. Shortland

AAA Report Number 2008.003

January 2008

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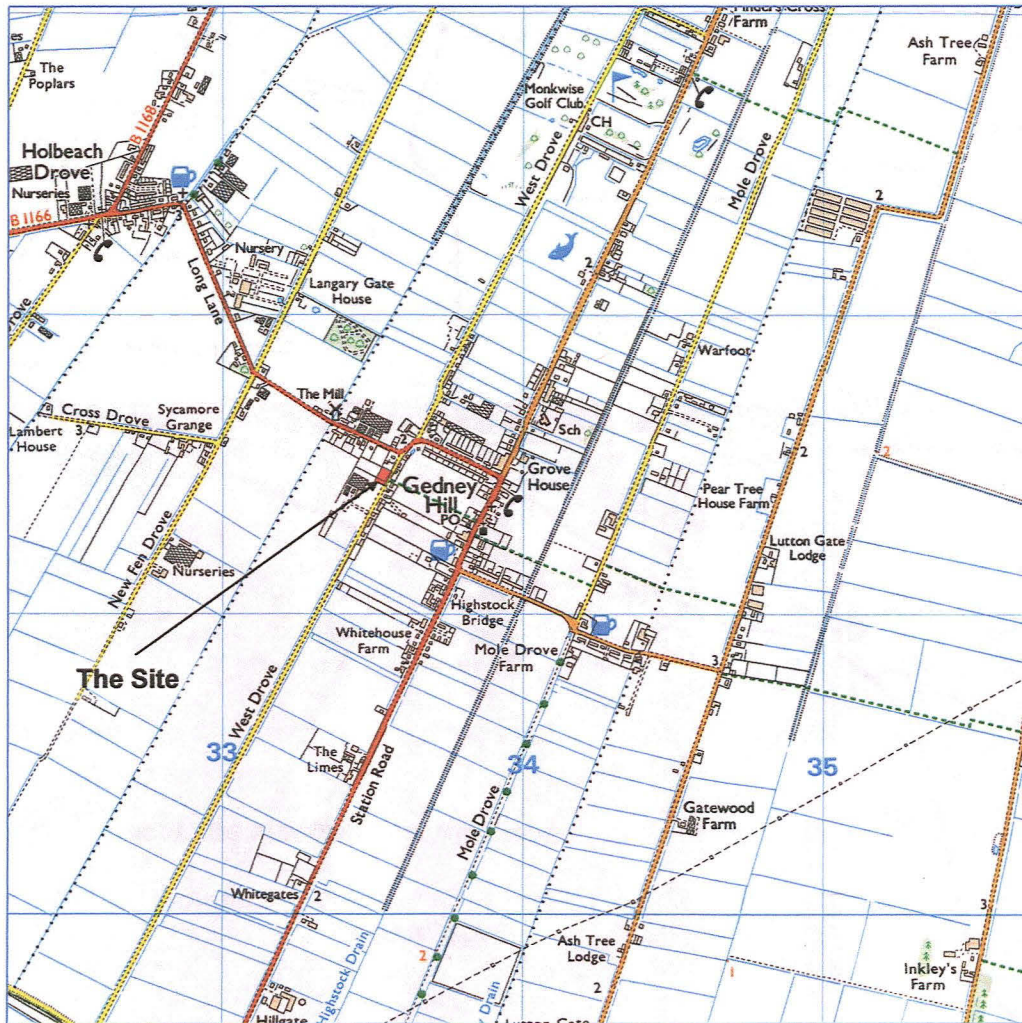
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### Document Control

Element	Name	Date
Report prepared by:	Chris Clay	28/01/2008
Report edited by:	Mark Allen	29/01/2008
Report produced by:	AAA	29/01/2008

## Summary

- An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in advance of a residential development on land at West Drove, Gedney Hill in Lincolnshire.
- The site is situated in a fenland landscape where aerial photography has identified widespread cropmarks suggestive of later prehistoric and Romano-British field systems.
- Trench 1 was devoid of archaeological finds or features. Undated linear features were identified in Trenches 2 and 3, while a large post-medieval boundary feature was also exposed in Trench 3.



**Figure 1:** Site location in red at scale 1:25,000  
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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Allen Archaeological Associates was commissioned by G R Merchant, on behalf of their client, Mr Sam Shortland, to carry out an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land at West Drove, Gedney Hill in Lincolnshire, in advance of a residential development.
- 1.2 The excavation, recording and reporting conforms to current national guidelines, as set out in the Institute for Field Archaeologists 'Standards and guidance for archaeological field evaluations' (IFA 1999), and the local guidelines set out in the *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: A Manual of Archaeological Practice* (LCC 1998), and a specification prepared by this company (Allen 2008).
- 1.3 The archive will be submitted to The Collection, Lincoln, within six months of the completion of the report.

## 2.0 Site location and description

- 2.1 Gedney Hill is situated in the administrative district of South Holland, approximately 70km south-south-east of Lincoln, and 13km south of Holbeach. The proposed development area is to the west of the historical core of the village, on the west side of West Drove.
- 2.2 The site comprises a block of flat agricultural land of approximately 0.21 hectares in the north-east corner of a larger field. It is centred on NGR TF 3354 1147, and lies at a height of approximately 1m OD.
- 2.3 The local geology comprises solid deposits of Jurassic Oxford Clay, overlain by marine alluvium in silt filled creeks, typical of a fenland environment (British Geological Survey 1984).

## 3.0 Planning background

- 3.1 A planning application was submitted to South Holland District Council for the construction of three pairs of affordable dwellings (Planning Application Number H07/1286/07). Prior to determination of the application, the Built Environment Officer (Lincolnshire) requested the undertaking of a programme of archaeological work to provide additional information.

## 4.0 Archaeological and historical background

- 4.1 The site lies within a landscape of cropmarks identified by aerial photography. These comprise field boundaries, enclosures and trackways of probable later prehistoric or Romano-British date. Records held by the Archaeology Data Service records such cropmarks at NGRs TF 331 105, TF 388 112, TF 333 123 and TF 327 117.
- 4.2 Romano-British coins have also been found in the area, including one of the emperor Gallienus (AD 253 – 268) and one of Theodosius II (AD 408 – 450) (ADS ref 353708).
- 4.3 Gedney Hill does not appear in the Domesday Book, nor do any of the neighbouring hamlets such as Holbeach Drove, Whaplode Drove or Shepeau Stow, suggesting that the area was largely unsuitable for permanent habitation during the early medieval period. The village church, Holy Trinity contains some 14<sup>th</sup> century elements, suggesting that some form of settlement had developed by this time (Pevsner and Harris 2002).

## 5.0 Methodology

- 5.1 The trial excavation methodology entailed the excavation of three trenches, each 10m long by 1.6m wide, and each located within the footprint of one of the pairs of dwellings (Figure 3).
- 5.2 Machine excavation was carried out using a JCB excavator fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless dykeing bucket. Topsoil and subsoil deposits were removed in spits not exceeding 0.1m in depth, under close archaeological supervision, until the first archaeologically significant horizon was exposed. All further excavation was then carried out by hand.
- 5.3 Archaeological features were sample excavated in order to determine their depth, profile, orientation and where possible, date and function. A full written record of all archaeological features and deposits was made on Allen Archaeological Associates context record sheets, accompanied by plan and section drawings at scales 1:50 and 1:20. A full colour photographic record was also maintained, and selected prints have been included as an appendix to this report (Appendix 1). The fieldwork was carried out by Phil Chavasse and Alison Lane on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2008.

## 6.0 Results

### 6.1 Trench 1 (Figure 4)

- 6.1.1 The trench was devoid of archaeological deposits. The stratigraphic sequence comprised a c.0.3m deep topsoil deposit, 100, which directly overlay a natural alluvial silt, 101. A machine excavated sondage at the north end of the trench showed this deposit to be consistent to at least 1.3m below the existing ground surface.

### 6.2 Trench 2 (Figure 5)

- 6.2.1 The uppermost deposit was a 0.35m deep silty topsoil, 200, which directly overlay a light yellow/brown natural alluvial silt, 203, with occasional lenses of blue/grey sandy clay, 203a.
- 6.2.2 A single linear feature, [201], was exposed at the east end of the trench. It was aligned broadly north-east to south-west, and survived to a depth of 0.34m. Only the west edge of the feature was exposed, the remainder lying beyond the limit of excavation. The feature contained a single natural silting deposit of brown silt, 202, that was undated.

### 6.3 Trench 3 (Figure 6)

- 6.3.1 The uppermost deposit in Trench 3 was a dark brown silty topsoil, 300, which sealed a natural alluvial silt, 301. At the north end of the trench, 301 was cut by a small curvilinear ditch, [304]. Only the southern edge of this feature was exposed, running on a broadly east – west alignment at the west side of the trench, turning to a north-west to south-west alignment towards the east side of the trench. The ditch contained two fills; a primary deposit of dark brown/grey clay, 309, representing a naturally accumulated alluvial deposit, which was sealed by 310, a grey/brown clayey silt, also likely to be a naturally accumulated deposit. Neither deposit produced any artefactual material.
- 6.3.2 A further ditch, 302, ran across the centre of the trench on a west-north-west to east-south-east alignment. The ditch was approximately 5.2m wide and 1.5m deep, with moderately shallow sides which became steeper towards a slightly concave base. A series of fills were recognised

within the ditch. The primary fill, 303, was a dark brown/grey alluvial deposit, which was sealed by the secondary fill, 305. This was a grey/brown clayey silt suggestive of gradual natural silting. The profile of the next fills in the sequence, 306 and 307, suggests that there may have been a recutting/cleaning out of the feature at this time. 306 was an orange/brown sandy silt representing a probable dump of redeposited natural material. It was sealed by 307, a grey/brown clay silt very similar to 305, similarly representing natural silting processes. Two sherds of pottery, one dated to the 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> century and one to the 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> century, and a fragment of 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century pantile were recovered from fill 306.

- 6.3.3 The latest fill in the ditch, 308, was a thin lens of dark brown/grey clay silt that may represent a deliberately dumped deposit to infill the feature. There was a clear distinction between this deposit and the overlying topsoil, suggesting recent truncation by ploughing.

## **7.0 Discussion and conclusion**

- 7.1 The evaluation has exposed archaeological deposits of limited significance. Trench 1 was devoid of archaeological finds or features, exposing a stratigraphic sequence typical of the fenland environment. The two undated linear features in Trenches 2 and 3 are likely to represent drainage and/or boundary features of an unknown date.
- 7.2 The large ditch in Trench 3 produced pottery and tile of post-medieval to early modern date. The feature appears to be very recent in date however, as it does not appear on Ordnance Survey maps until after the 1952 edition. The boundary is still visible on the current edition of the Ordnance Survey map of the site (Figure 1), which also suggests its final infilling was undertaken very recently.

## **8.0 Effectiveness of methodology**

- 8.1 The trial trenching methodology was appropriate to the scale and nature of the development. It has shown the presence of a very limited archaeological resource within the proposed development area.

## **9.0 Acknowledgements**

- 9.1 Allen Archaeological Associates would like to thank G.R. Merchant for this commission. Thanks also go Mr. Sam Shortland for his co-operation during the fieldwork.



## 10.0 References

- Allen M., 2008, *Specification for an archaeological evaluation by trial excavation: West Drove, Gedney Hill, Lincolnshire*, Allen Archaeological Associates
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- Pevsner N., and Harris J., 2002, *The Buildings of England: Lincolnshire, second edition*, Penguin, London

## 11.0 Site archive

- 11.1 The documentary archive is currently in the possession of Allen Archaeological Associates. It will be submitted to The Collection, Lincoln within six months, where it will be stored under the unique archive code 2008.3.

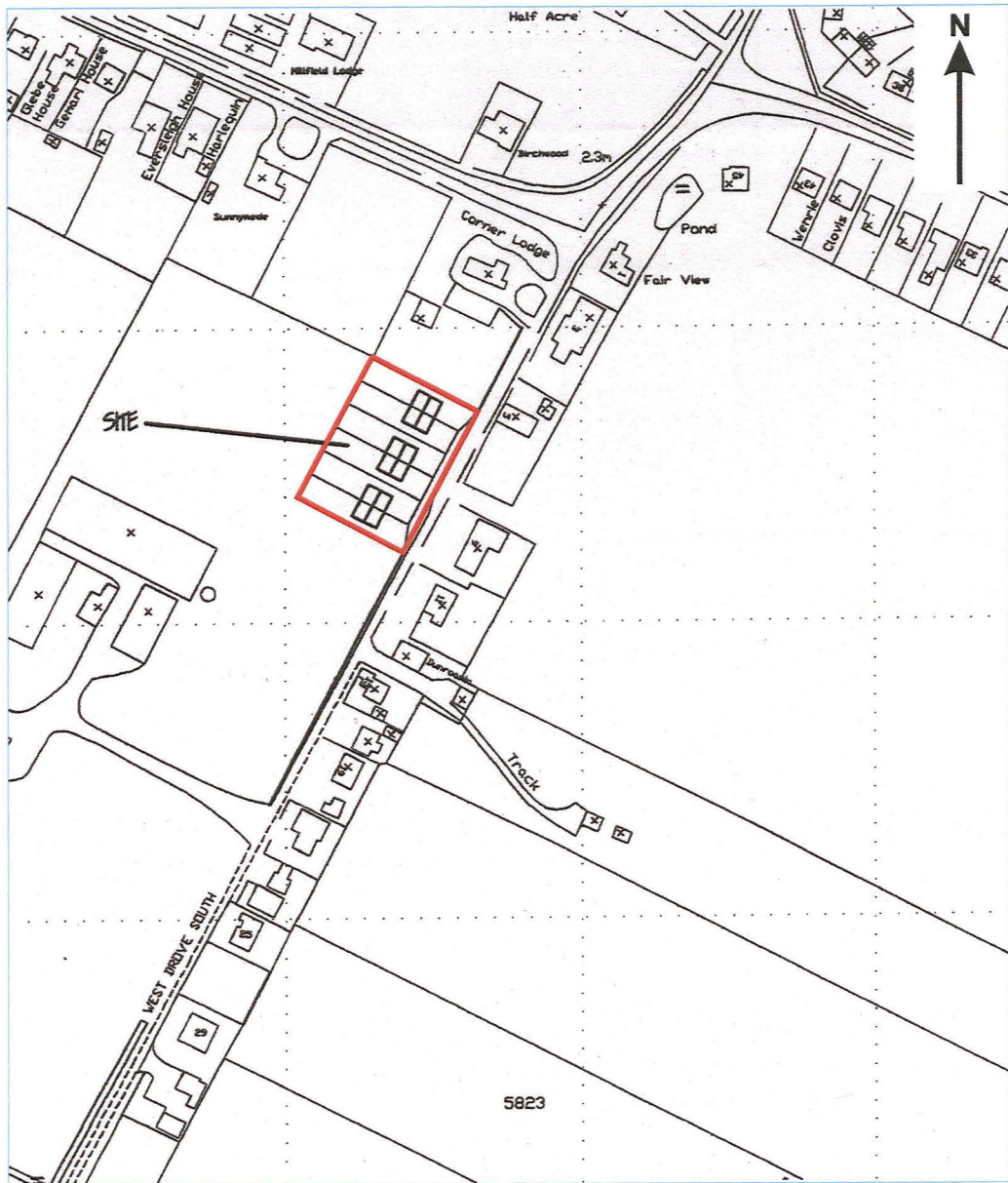


Figure 2: Site location at scale 1:2500

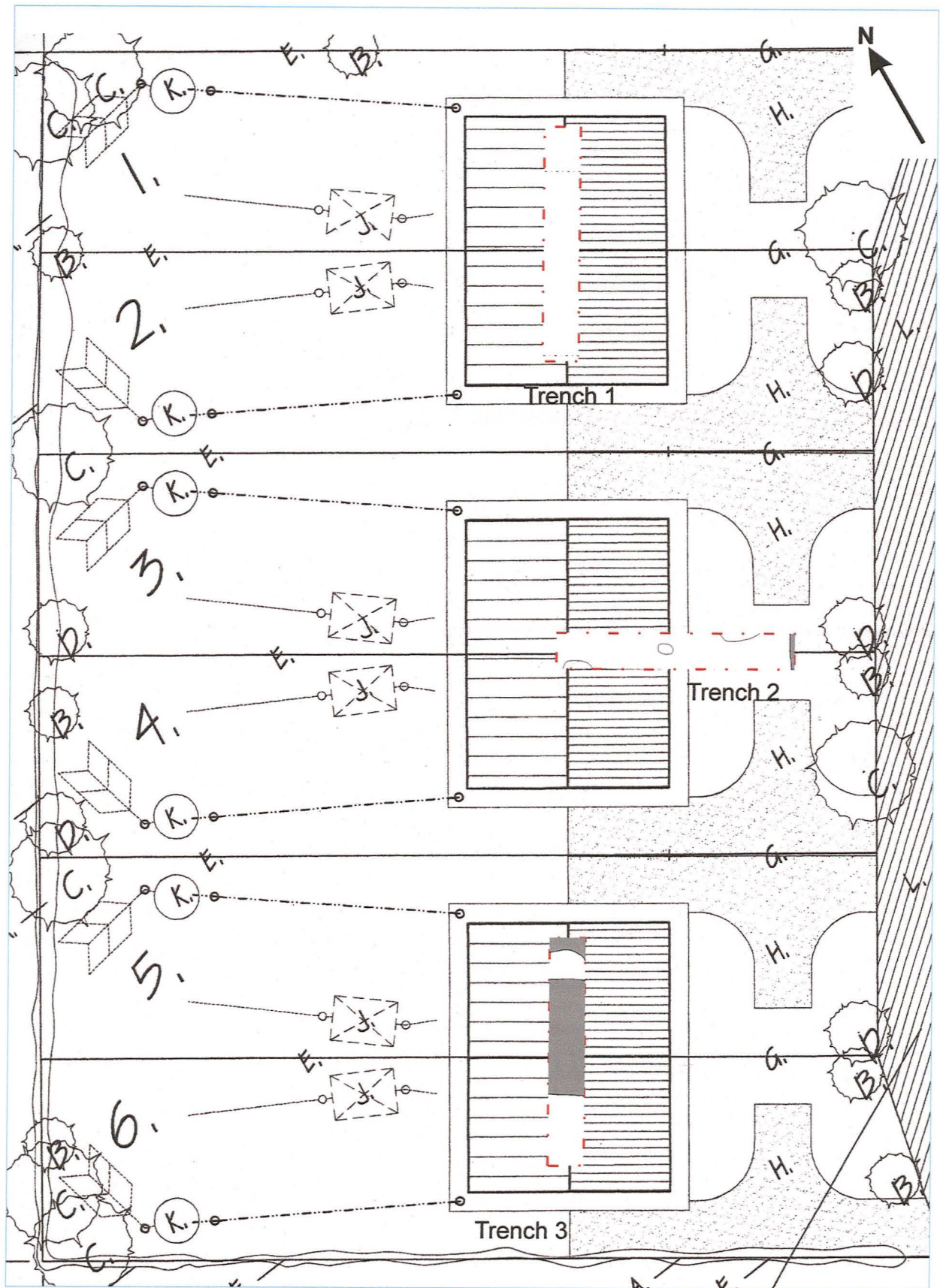
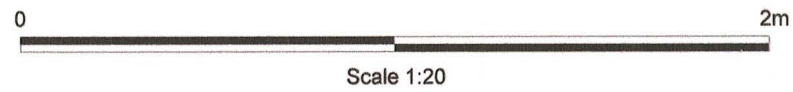
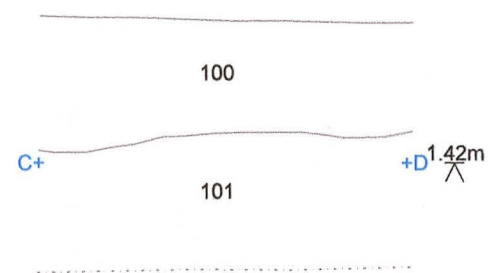
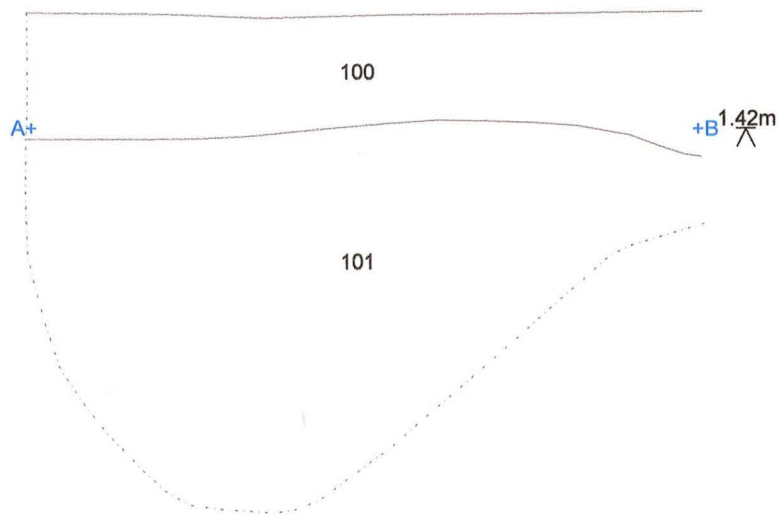
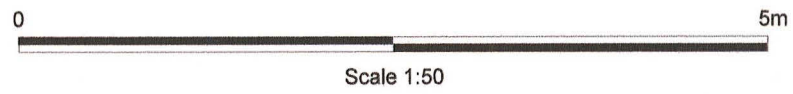
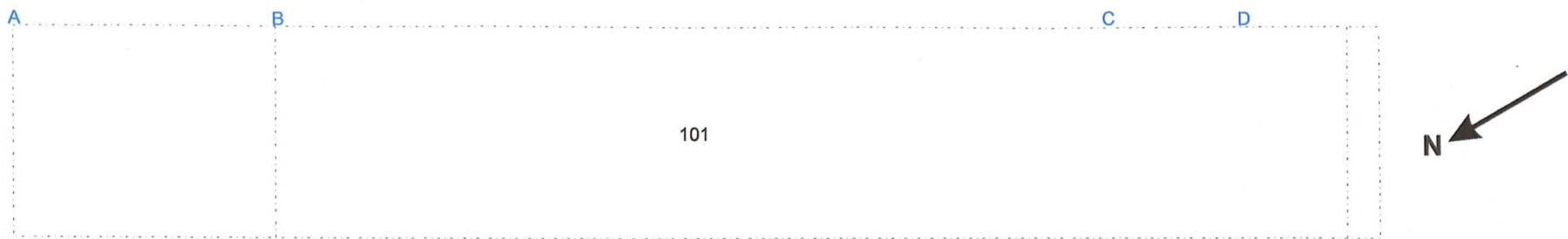


Figure 3: Trench locations in red at scale 1:250. Shaded areas represent archaeological features/deposits



**Figure 4:** Trench 1 plan at scale 1:50 and sections at scale 1:20

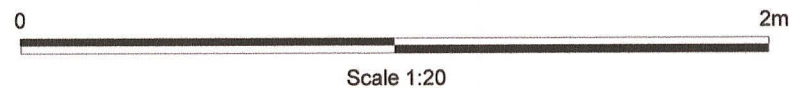
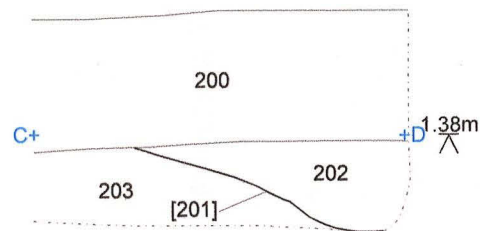
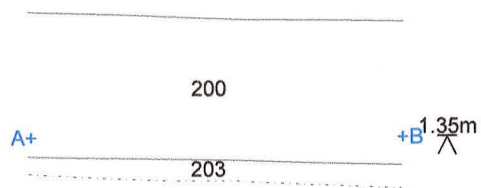
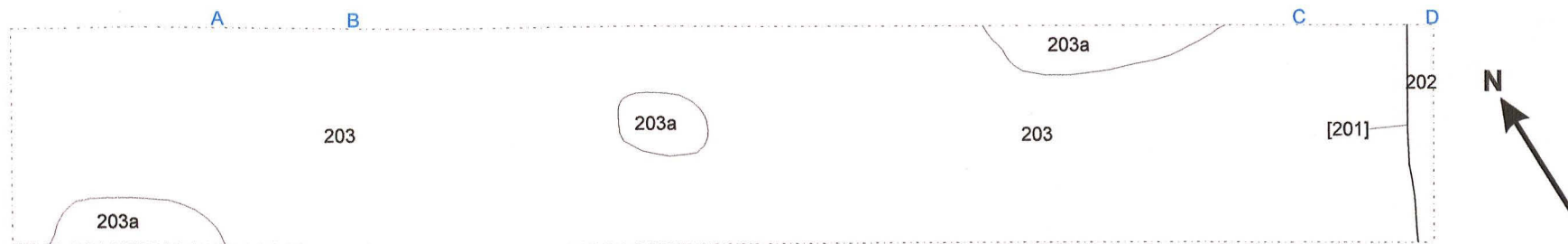


Figure 5: Trench 2 plan at scale 1:50 and sections at scale 1:20

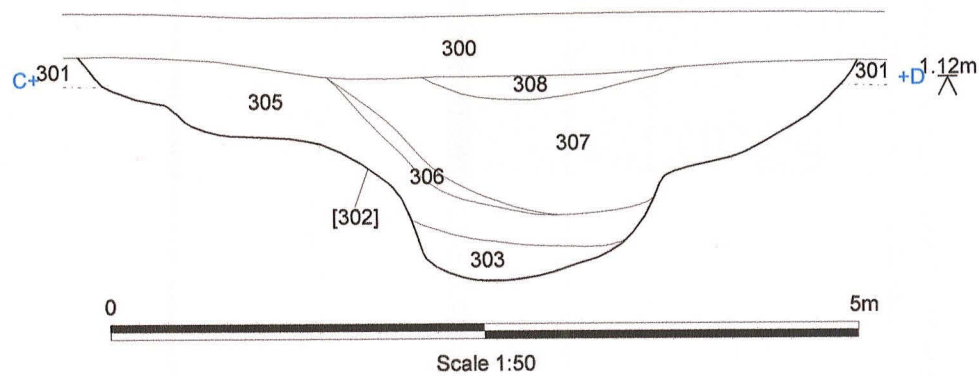
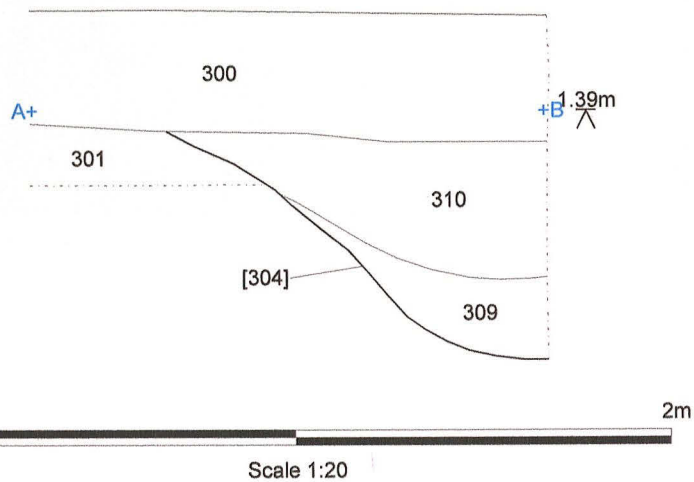
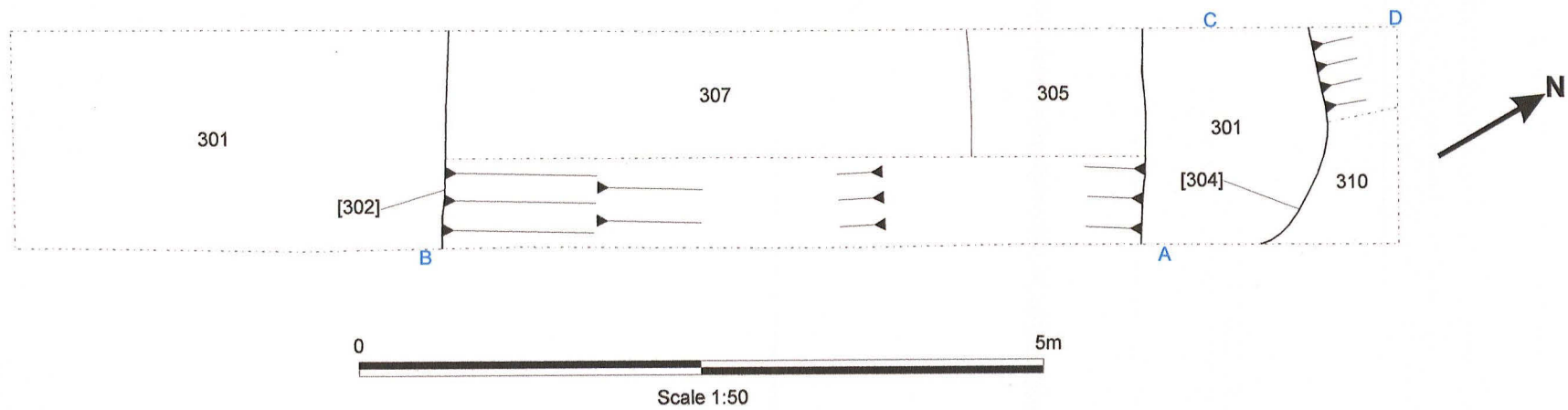


Figure 6: Trench 3 plan at scale 1:50 and sections at scales 1:50 and 1:20

**Appendix 1: Colour plates**



**Plate 1:** General view of the site, looking north-north-east



**Plate 2:** Trench 1, looking north-north-east



**Plate 3:** Trench 2, looking east-south-east



**Plate 4:** Ditch 201, looking north-north-east



**Plate 5:** Trench 3, looking south-south-west



**Plate 6:** Slot through ditch 302, Trench 3, looking south



**Appendix 2: Post-Roman pottery and tile assessment**

Jane Young

**Pottery archive**

context	cname	full name	sub fabric	form type	sherds	weight	part	description	date
307	BOU	Bourne D ware	slightly sandy	small jug/jar	1	4	BS		mid 15th - mid 16th
307	BL	Black-glazed wares	Staffs ?	bowl	1	3	BS	internal glaze	late 17th - 18th

**Tile archive**

context	cname	full name	frags	weight	date
307	PANTDISC	Pantile (discarded)	1	30	late 18th to 20th

## Appendix 3: Context summary list

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
100	Layer	Dark grey/brown silt, occasional stones	Modern ploughsoil
101	Layer	Pale yellow/brown sandy silt, occasional pale yellowish white lenses	Natural alluvial silt
200	Layer	Dark grey/brown silt, occasional stones	Modern ploughsoil
201	Cut	NE – SW aligned linear feature at north end of trench. Contains 202	Undated linear boundary feature
202	Fill	Brown sandy silt	Fill of 201. Probable natural silting
203	Layer	Pale yellow/brown sandy silt, occasional pale yellow/white lenses	Natural alluvial silt
300	Layer	Dark grey/brown silt, occasional stones	Modern ploughsoil
301	Layer	Pale yellow/brown sandy silt, occasional pale yellow/white lenses	Natural alluvial silt
302	Cut	Large linear feature, aligned WNW – ESE. Contains 303, 305, 306, 307, 308	Modern boundary feature
303	Fill	Dark brown/grey sandy silt, with decayed organic material	Primary alluvial deposit in ditch 302. Sealed by 305
304	Cut	Curvilinear ditch cut, running E – W and NW – SE at N end of trench. Contains 309, 310	Undated curvilinear drainage/boundary feature
305	Fill	Grey/brown clayey silt	Secondary fill of 302. Probable natural silting. Seals 303.
306	Fill	Orange/brown sandy silt	Dumped deposit in 302. Probable redeposited natural
307	Fill	Grey/brown clay silt	Fill of 302. Profile may define a recut of ditch after deposition of 305
308	Fill	Brown/grey clayey silt	Final fill of 302. Dumped deposit.
309	Fill	Dark brown/grey sandy silt	Primary alluvial silting deposit in ditch 304. Sealed by 310
310	Fill	Grey/brown clayey silt	Secondary fill of ditch 304. Probable natural silting sealing 309

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**OASIS ID: allenarc1-36911**

## Project details

Project name	Archaeological evaluation by trial excavation West Drove, Gedney Hill, Lincolnshire
Short description of the project	Archaeological evaluation comprising 3no 10m long trenches exposed an early modern field boundary and two undated ditches
Project dates	Start: 09-01-2008 End: 10-01-2008
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	H07/1286/07 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	2008.3 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 3 - Operations to a depth more than 0.25m
Monument type	DITCH Modern
Monument type	DITCH Uncertain
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Significant Finds	TILE Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	Between deposition of an application and determination

## Project location

Country	England
Site location	LINCOLNSHIRE SOUTH HOLLAND GEDNEY HILL West Drove, Gedney Hill
Study area	0.20 Hectares
Site coordinates	TF 3354 1147 52.6840763727 -0.02423785926350 52 41 02 N 000 01 27 W Point
Height OD	Min: 1.00m Max: 2.00m

**Project creators**

Name of Organisation Allen Archaeological Associates  
 Project brief originator City/Nat. Park/District/Borough archaeologist  
 Project design originator Mark Allen  
 Project director/manager Chris Clay  
 Project supervisor Phil Chavasse  
 Type of sponsor/funding body Developer  
 Name of sponsor/funding body G.R.Merchant Ltd.

**Project archives**

Physical Archive recipient The Collection, Lincoln  
 Physical Archive ID 2008.3  
 Physical Contents 'Ceramics'  
 Digital Archive recipient The Collection, Lincoln  
 Digital Archive ID 2008.3  
 Digital Contents 'none'  
 Digital Media available 'Images raster / digital photography'  
 Paper Archive recipient The Collection, Lincoln  
 Paper Archive ID 2008.3  
 Paper Contents 'none'  
 Paper Media available 'Context sheet', 'Diary', 'Drawing', 'Plan', 'Report', 'Section'

**Project bibliography 1**

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)  
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