LINDSEY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES

M8/14

Churchill Avenue
Horncastle, Lincs.

Archaeological Evaluation Trenching

NGR: TF 26042 68946
Site Code: CAHO 08
LCNCC Accession No.: 2008.165
Planning Application No.: N/A

Report for

Ross Davy Ltd

on behalf of
New Linx Housing Trust

By

G. Glover

LAS Report No.: 1093

November 2008

25 West Parade · Lincoln · LN1 1NW
Telephone 01522 544554 · Facsimile 01522 522211
Email info@linarch.co.uk · Website www.linarch.co.uk

VAT Registration No. 813 8029 41 · Lindsey Archaeological Services Ltd · Registered in England and Wales No. 6133162

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Summary

The evaluation trench and test pits revealed significant archaeological deposits of Roman date, largely in the form of a thick layer of buried soil, directly below modern overburden. The top of the layer varied in height from 29.42m OD in Test Pit 2 to 28.62m OD in Trench 1. In addition cut features of probable Roman date were encountered in Trench 1 and Test Pit 3 sealed by the buried soil. The remains indicate that there is the potential for further archaeological deposits and features to extend across the proposed development area.

The buried soil may represent a continuation of a similar deposit revealed during other archaeological investigations in the immediate vicinity. This deposit has been most closely studied during excavations to the west of the development site where significant Roman remains both pre-dated and post-dated the buried soil.

Although no archaeological features were encountered that cut into the developed soil, the area covered by the trenches and test pits was relatively limited and it remains a possibility that such features may occur elsewhere at the site. No evidence for significant horizontal truncation was encountered at the Churchill Avenue site.

Introduction

Lindsey Archaeological Services was commissioned by Ross Davy Associates, on behalf of New Linx Housing Trust, in October 2008 to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Churchill Avenue, Horncastle (Fig. 1). The work was carried out in accordance with the Project Design dated October 2008, and general requirements set out in the *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook* published by the Archaeology Section, Lincolnshire County Council (1998). Work commenced on 21st October 2008 and was completed on the 18th November 2008.

Site Location and Description

The modern town of Horncastle is focused at a confluence of the Rivers Bain and Waring at the southern tip of the Lincolnshire wolds. The proposed development site lies south of the Roman walled enclosure, which forms the modern town centre and east of the River Bain (Fig 1). It is situated at the northern end of Churchill Avenue; to the east and west of numbers 2 and 4 (Fig 2). The eastern area was formerly a children's play area, measuring *c.*420m^2, with the western area given over to car parking and garages, covering an area of *c.* 720m^2.

Planning Background

An application has been submitted to East Lindsey District Council for residential development comprising 5 dwellings, with associated services and new access.

As a consequence of the high archaeological potential of the site, Lincolnshire County Council requested that the applicant provide information concerning the potential impact of the proposal on archaeological remains, prior to the determination of the application. In order to provide this information an archaeological evaluation of the site was necessary.

Archaeological Background

There is evidence for extensive Romano British settlement in Horncastle, a late Roman fort lies to the north of the proposed development, although the original Roman focus of the town may have been further to the south. The Saxon and medieval settlement was concentrated within walls of the Roman fort, although recent finds of early Saxon burials were outside the Roman walls. In the post-medieval period the settlement expanded south of the Waring and east of the River Bain, over an area previously occupied in the early Roman period. Roman and Iron Age finds in this part of Horncastle have been recorded over the past 200 years as development has encroached on the settlement. To the west of the proposed development site there are substantial cropmarks which appear to represent part of this unwalled settlement and range from the late Iron Age to Late Roman period in date.

Evaluation in Selwood Gardens to the north of Churchill Avenue in 2005 encountered part of the ditched enclosure systems recorded as cropmarks to the west. Excavation of a sewer pipe trench in the playing fields to the north of Churchill Avenue in 2007, recorded extensive remains of the same enclosure complex. A Roman cemetery which both predated and post dated the field system was also encountered. A Roman cremation was found at the west end of Churchill Avenue in the 1960s when a watermain was being laid and an inhumation was found further east on Churchill Avenue to the east the proposed development site.

Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the evaluation are set out in the Project Design. The purpose of the evaluation was to

- establish the presence or absence, quality and extent of archaeological remains and their location within the development area
- gather sufficient information to enable an assessment of the potential and significance of any archaeological remains to be made and the impact which development will have upon them
- enable an informed decision to be made regarding the future treatment of any archaeological remains and consider any appropriate mitigatory measures either in advance of and/or during development

Method

The original methodology for the evaluation, set out in the Project Design, was for the investigation of 3 trenches measuring 15m x 2m, as requested by the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Officer. The need to maintain an access to garages situated in the car park area and the rear access to 17 Dymoke Drive, which ran through the car park area, necessitated a change of methodology (agreed in advance by the Historic Environment Officer). A single trench, measuring *c.*15m x 2m and 3 test pits, measuring between 0.70m and 1.50m x *c.*1m formed the basis of the revised methodology. The trench was located in the grassed area to the east of numbers 2 and 4 Churchill Avenue and the test pits were sited within the car park to the east, located to keep all access routes open (Fig 2).

The trench and Test Pits 2 and 3 were machine excavated, using a JCB excavator fitted with a toothless dyking bucket to the top of the first recognisable archaeological archaeologically significant horizon. All machine excavation was supervised by an experienced archaeologist. Test Pit 1 was hand excavated throughout.

The trench and test pits were hand-cleaned to reveal features in plan and carefully selected cross-sections through the features were excavated to enable sufficient information about form, development date and stratigraphic relationships to be recorded without prejudice to more extensive investigations should these prove to be necessary.

Archaeological recording was carried out by a team of 2 experienced archaeologists, including a Site Director. A full written (single context) and photographic record was made of the site, including site plans at a scale of 1:20 or 1:50, along with sections at an appropriate scale.

A temporary bench mark of 28.85m OD was established from a known spot height of 33m OD located at the junction of Ndola Drive and Boston Road.

Results

Trench 1 (Fig 3, Pl 1-3)

The earliest deposit encountered within the trench comprised light brown and light grey sand and gravel, **102**, which formed the natural deposits within the trench. The deposit was encountered at a height of 27.97m OD, approximately 0.60m below the present ground level.

An E-W orientated ditch, **104**, extended across the southern half of the trench. It measured 1.35m wide x 0.35m deep and contained a single fill, **103**. To the south, a N-S orientated ditch, **106**, extended into the trench for a distance of 1.75m before ending in a rounded terminus. It measured 0.70m wide x 0.26m deep and contained a fill, **105**.

A layer, **101**, measuring between 0.60 and 0.70m thick, extended across the trench, sealing ditches

104 and **106**. It comprised very dark brown silty sand and produced 4 sherds of pottery dated to the late 3rd to 4th century AD. The deposit is interpreted as a buried soil layer.

The buried soil was sealed by a 0.20m thick layer of topsoil, **100**, which formed the ground surface at a height of 28.73m OD.

Test Pit 1 (Fig 4, Pl 4)

Natural sand and gravel, **1003**, formed the earliest deposit within Test Pit 1 at a height of 28.43m OD.

It was sealed by a 0.29m thick layer, **1002**, comprising mid greyish brown silty sand, which contained a number of large lumps of concreted iron rich sand. It was sealed by a second layer, **1001**, which comprised dark brown sand, similar to layer **101** in Trench 1, and measured 0.42m thick. Both layers **1002** and **1001** are interpreted as buried soil layers and it seems likely that layer **1001** is a continuation of layer **101** encountered in Trench 1. It is possible, given the small size of the test pit, that layer **1002** is the fill of the a large feature rather than a layer of buried soil, with Test Pit 1 located within the feature.

A layer of topsoil, **1000**, formed the latest deposit encountered in the test pit and the present ground surface. It measured 0.52m thick and was encountered at a height of 29.66m OD.

Test Pit 2 (Fig 4. Pl 5)

A mid orange-yellow sand, **2003**, formed the earliest deposit and the natural ground within the test pit at a height of 28.81m OD.

It was sealed by a 0.08m thick layer, **2002**, comprising dark grey silty sand and gravel. A sherd of Roman pottery was recovered from the deposit. The layer was sealed by a 0.60m thick layer, **2001**, comprising dark greyish brown sand, similar to deposits **101** and **1001** encountered in Trench 1 and Test Pit 1 respectively. It seems likely that it is a continuation of this same buried soil layer.

The car park surface and make up formed the latest deposit and modern ground surface encountered in the test pit. It measured 0.22m thick at a height of 29.62m OD.

Test Pit 3 (Fig 4, Pl 6)

A mid orange brown sand and gravel, **3005**, formed the earliest deposit and the natural ground encountered within the test pit at a height of 28.73m OD.

It was sealed by a 0.10m thick layer, **3004**, comprising dark brown sand and gravel that probably represents a buried soil, perhaps a continuation of layer **2002** encountered in Test Pit 2. The layer was cut by a pit/posthole or ditch terminus, **3003** which extended into the trench for a distance of 0.22m and measured 0.34m wide x 0.36m deep. The feature contained a single fill, **3002**.

Feature **3003** was sealed by a 0.52m thick layer, **3001**, comprising dark brown sand that probably represents a continuation of the buried soil layers **101**, **1001** and **2001** represented in Trench 1 and Test Pits 1 and 2 respectively.

A continuation of the car park surface, **3000**, formed the present ground surface within the test pit. It measured 0.28m thick and was encountered at a height of 29.58m OD.

Discussion

Features and/or deposits of archaeological significance were encountered in each of the trenches and test pits investigated. Whilst it was not possible to fully understand the function of the features within the small confines of the investigated areas it is likely that they represent ditches and pits of Roman origin, similar to those encountered at other sites in the near vicinity. The features were confined to Trench 1 and Test Pit 3, however a substantial layer of buried developed soil, measuring over 0.50m thick, extended across the investigated areas, sealing the features. In Trench 1 it produced a small assemblage of late 3rd-4th century AD pottery and it seems likely that the deposit originated during this period. A similar, thick dark soil layer of this date has been noted at a number of sites in the Horncastle area, most notably at the sports fields to the west (Glover forthcoming). At the sports field site many significant archaeological features were sealed by the dark soil layer whilst others were cut into it, including a Roman cemetery. It remains possible therefore that features at the development site may be similar, with some sealed by the dark soil layer and others cut into the top of it.

Conclusion

Any development at the site which impacts below the level of the present day topsoil and car park has the potential to impact on archaeological deposits and remains at the site. This equates to any disturbance below 28.60m OD in the area to the west of numbers 2 and 4 Churchill Avenue and 29.42m OD in the car park area to the east. Archaeologically sensitive deposits are present directly below the modern layers and although the only features encountered during the evaluation were sealed by a thick buried soil layer, the presence of archaeological features cut into this layer beyond the confines of the investigated areas cannot be discounted.

Gavin Glover
Lindsey Archaeological Services
November 2008

Acknowledgements

LAS would like to thank New Linx Housing Trust for their help. The Roman pottery report was by Ian Rowlandson. This report was edited and collated by Naomi Field.

Reference

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Contents of the Site Archive

21 Context sheets
4 Plans
5 Sections
Correspondence
Photographs: LAS film nos. 08/122,
Specialist reports

APPENDIX 1

CAHO 08 Context List

Context	Type	Form	Phase	Area	Description	Interpretation	Length	Width	Depth/Thickness	Same as
100	Layer	Layer	-	TR1	Dark reddish brown silty clay	Topsoil	-	-	0.20m	
101	Layer	Layer	-	TR1	Very dark brown silty sand, occasional charcoal flecks, moderate small stones	Buried soil	-	-	0.70m	1001 2001 3001
102	Natural	Natural	-	TR1	Light brown and light grey sand and gravel	Natural	-	-	-	
103	Fill	Fill	-	TR1	Mottled mid orange/mid brown silty sand, frequent small stones	Fill of ditch **104**	-	-	0.35m	
104	Cut	Ditch	-	TR1	Linear, straight, steep north side gradual south side, flat base, E-W orientated	Possible boundary ditch	-	1.35m	0.35m	
105	Fill	Fill	-	TR1	Mid greyish brown silty sand, occasional charcoal flecks, occasional small stones	Fill of ditch **106**	-	-	0.26m	
106	Cut	Ditch	-	TR1	Linear, rounded terminus at north end, steep sides, flat base	Ditch, uncertain function	1.75m	0.70m	0.26m	
1000	Layer	Layer	-	TP1	Dark brown sandy silt	Topsoil/made ground	-	-	0.52m	
1001	Layer	Layer	-	TP1	Dark brown sandy silt	Buried soil	-	-	0.42m	101 2001 3001
1002	Layer	Layer	-	TP1	Mid greyish brown silty sand, frequent large lumps of Fe. rich concreted sand	Buried soil or possible feature fill	-	-	0.29m	
1003	Natural	Natural	-	TP1	Light yellow sand and gravel	Natural	-	-	-	
2000	Layer	Layer	-	TP2	Grey and light brown tarmac and stone	Car park surface and make up	-	-	0.22m	3000
2001	Layer	Layer	-	TP2	Dark greyish brown sand, occasional small stones	Buried soil	-	-	0.60m	101 1001 3001
2002	Layer	Layer	-	TP2	Dark grey silty sand and gravel	Buried soil	-	-	0.08m	
2003	Natural	Natural	-	TP2	Mid orange yellow sand, moderate samll stones	Natural	-	-	-	
3000	Layer	Layer	-	TP3	Grey and light brown tarmac and crushed stone	Car park surface and make up	-	-	0.28m	2000
3001	Layer	Layer	-	TP3	Dark brown sand, occasional small stones	Buried soil	-	-	0.52m	101 1001 2001
3002	Fill	Fill	-	TP3	Mid brown silty sand and gravel	Fill of pit/posthole **3003**	-	-	0.36m	
3003	Cut	Pit?	-	TP3	Sub semi circular, steep, near vertical sides, concave base	Pit/posthole or ditch terminus	0.22m	0.34m	0.36m	
3004	Layer	Layer	-	TP3	Dark brown sand and gravel	Buried soil	-	-	0.10m	
3005	Natural	Natural	-	TP3	Mid orange brown sand and gravel	Natural	-	-	-	

APPENDIX 2

An Assemblage of Roman Pottery from an Evaluation at Churchill Avenue, Horncastle, Lincolnshire, CAHO08

(OS Grid Reff. TF 26042 68946, Acc. 2008.165)

I.M. Rowlandson with M.J. Darling
November 6th 2008

The pottery has been recorded to the basic archive level according to the guidelines of the Study Group for Roman Pottery using the computer codes and pottery recording system of the City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit, with sherd count and weight in grams as the measures. The site archive (Appendix 1) has been collated using Microsoft Excel 2000 added to the Lincolnshire database and archived using Access 2000 (CAHO08.XLS and RBPOT.MDB). All sherds are in a stable condition and should be retained.

The pottery consists of 5 sherds weighing a total of 138g (mean sherd weight 27.6g) from two contexts. The majority of the pottery, from context 101, dates to the late 3rd to 4th century AD. A single sherd from context 2002 broadly dates to the Roman period.

The pottery from each context is described in the archive below. The main group of pottery, context 101, comes from a buried soil layer (*pers. com.* Ruben Lopez Catalan). This group of pottery suggests that this layer may be similar to the late Roman buried soil encountered during excavations on the nearby site (HAWP06 context 002, Darling *forthcoming*). One sherd from a large bowl shows signs of sooting oxidisation and spauling from being exposed to a high heat.

Context	Fabric	Form	Dec	Novess	Alter	Dwg no	Comments	Join	Sh	Wt
101	SAMCG?	BD		1	ABR		BS		1	6
101	SHEL		HM	1			BS; DRK BLACK; VESIC; DWSH LOC?; QU RND SP >0.3MM; LACKS SILTY MATRIX		1	3
101	GREY	BFB		1	BURNT INT		RIM; DIAM 26 ; LGHT GRY MRGNS; QU ANG ABUN >0.2MM; THK HEAVY		1	69
101	GREY	BWM ?	SHG X2	1	SPAUL; BURNT ; OVER FIRED?		BS; SHLDR; 2X GRVS LIKE SWPOOL; PATCH OXIDISATION		1	39
101	ZDATE						L3-4			
2002	GREY			1			BASE; TRIMMED FOOT FRAG		1	21
2002	ZDATE						ROM			
			TOTALS	5					5	138

APPENDIX 3

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

List of Projects | Search Projects | New project | Change your details | HER coverage | Change country | Log out

Printable version

OASIS ID: lindseya1-52175

Project details

Project name	Churchill Avenue, Horncastle, Evalaution Trenching
Short description of the project	The evaluation trench and test pits revealed significant archaeological deposits of Roman date, largely in the form of a thick layer of buried soil, directly below modern overburden. The top of the layer varied in height from 29.42m OD in Test Pit 2 to 28.62m OD in Trench 1. In addition cut features of probable Roman date were encountered in Trench 1 and Test Pit 3 sealed by the buried soil. The remains indicate that there is the potential for further archaeological deposits and features to extend across the proposed development area. The buried soil may represent a continuation of a similar deposit revealed during other archaeological investigations in the immediate vicinity. This deposit has been most closely studied during excavations to the west of the development site where significant Roman remains both pre-dated and post-dated the buried soil. Although no archaeological features were encountered that cut into the developed soil, the area covered by the trenches and test pits was relatively limited and it remains a possibility that such features may occur elsewhere at the site. No evidence for significant horizontal truncation was encountered at the Churchill Avenue site.
Project dates	Start: 21-10-2008 End: 18-11-2008
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	2008.165 - Museum accession ID
Any associated project reference codes	CAHO 08 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Monument type	DITCHES Roman
Monument type	PITS Roman
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches','Test Pits'
Development type	Housing estate

Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

Project location

Country	England
Site location	LINCOLNSHIRE EAST LINDSEY HORNCASTLE Churchill Avenue, Horncastle
Postcode	LN9 6
Study area	1140.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TF 26042 68946 53.2023253579 -0.112758013788 53 12 08 N 000 06 45 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 27.97m Max: 28.81m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Naomi Field
Project director/manager	Naomi Field
Project supervisor	Gavin Glover
Type of sponsor/funding body	Landowner
Name of sponsor/funding body	New Linx Housing Truct

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	LCNCC
Physical Archive ID	LCNCC 2008.165
Physical Contents	'Ceramics'
Digital Archive recipient	Lindsey Archaeological Services
Digital Contents	'none'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography','Spreadsheets','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	LCNCC
Paper Archive ID	LCNCC 2008.165

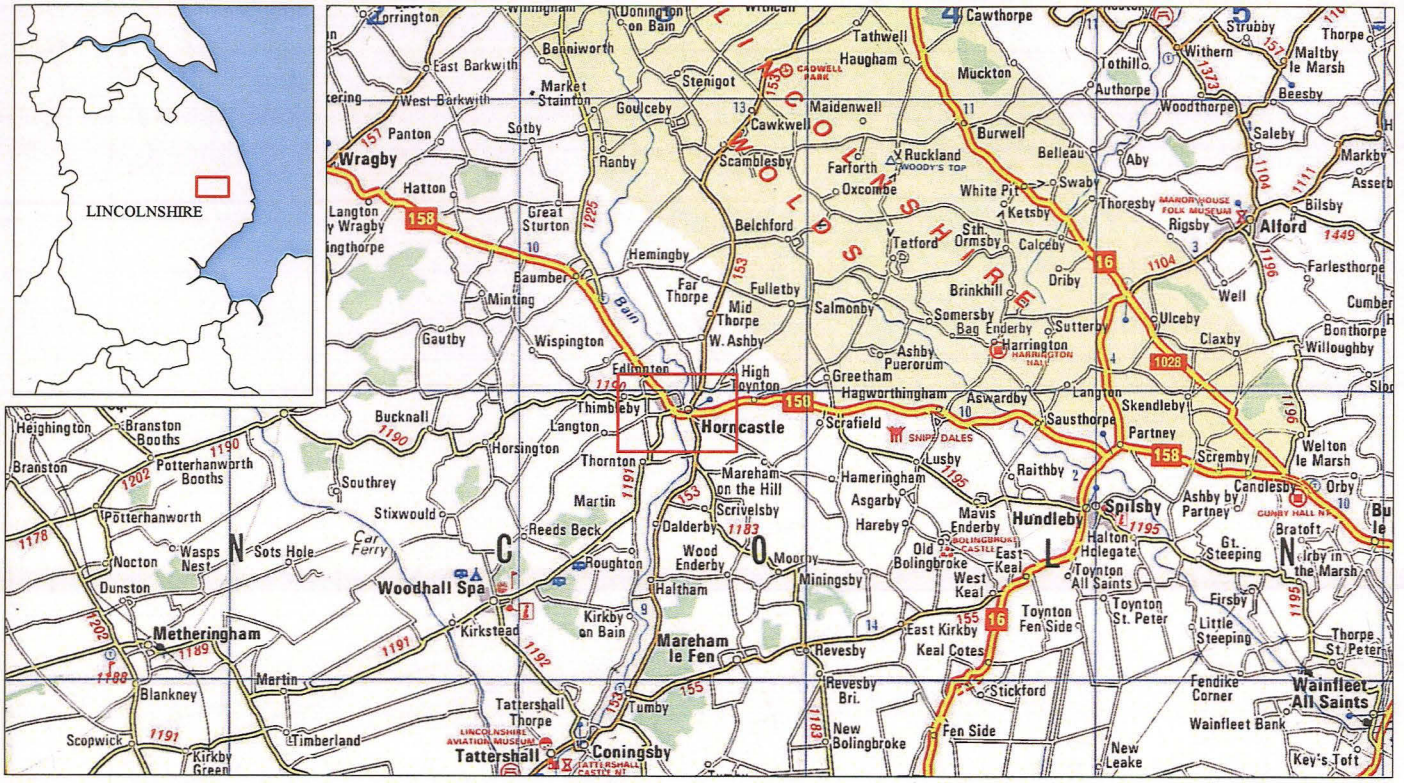
Paper Contents	'none'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Correspondence','Drawing','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section'

Entered by	Gavin Glover (gavin@linarch.co.uk)
Entered on	2 December 2008

OASIS:

Please e-mail English Heritage for OASIS help and advice

THE FIGURES



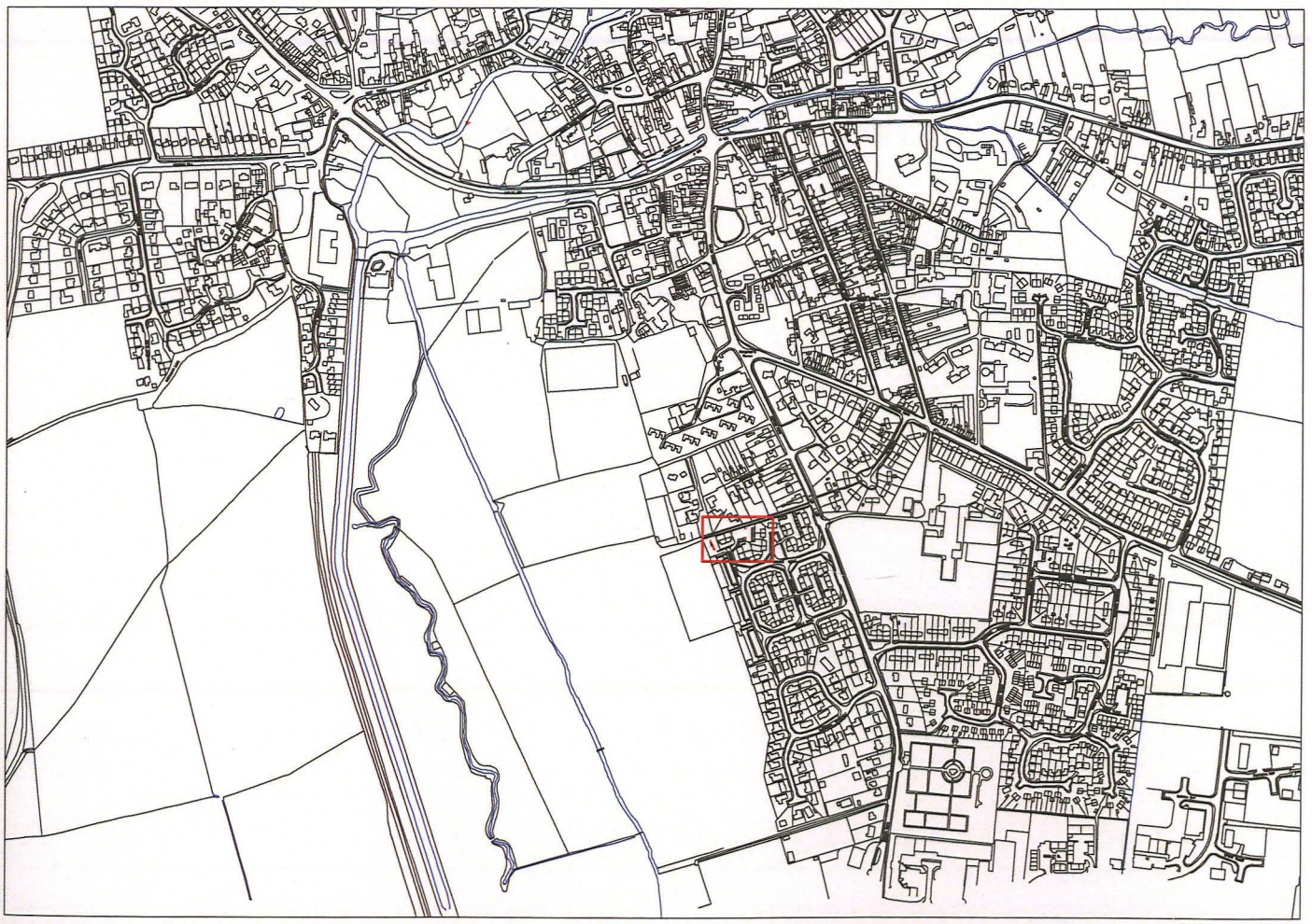


Fig.1 Site Location. Inset above based on the 1:10,000 Ordnance Survey map. Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO. LAS Licence no. AL 100002165.

LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES	PROJECT NAME: Churchill Avenue, Horncastle	SITE CODE: CAHO 08	DRAWN BY: GG	REGISTERED ORGANISATION IFA	N
	PROJECT TYPE: Evaluation	ACC. NO: 2008.165	DATE: 26/11/08		
		SCALE: Various			

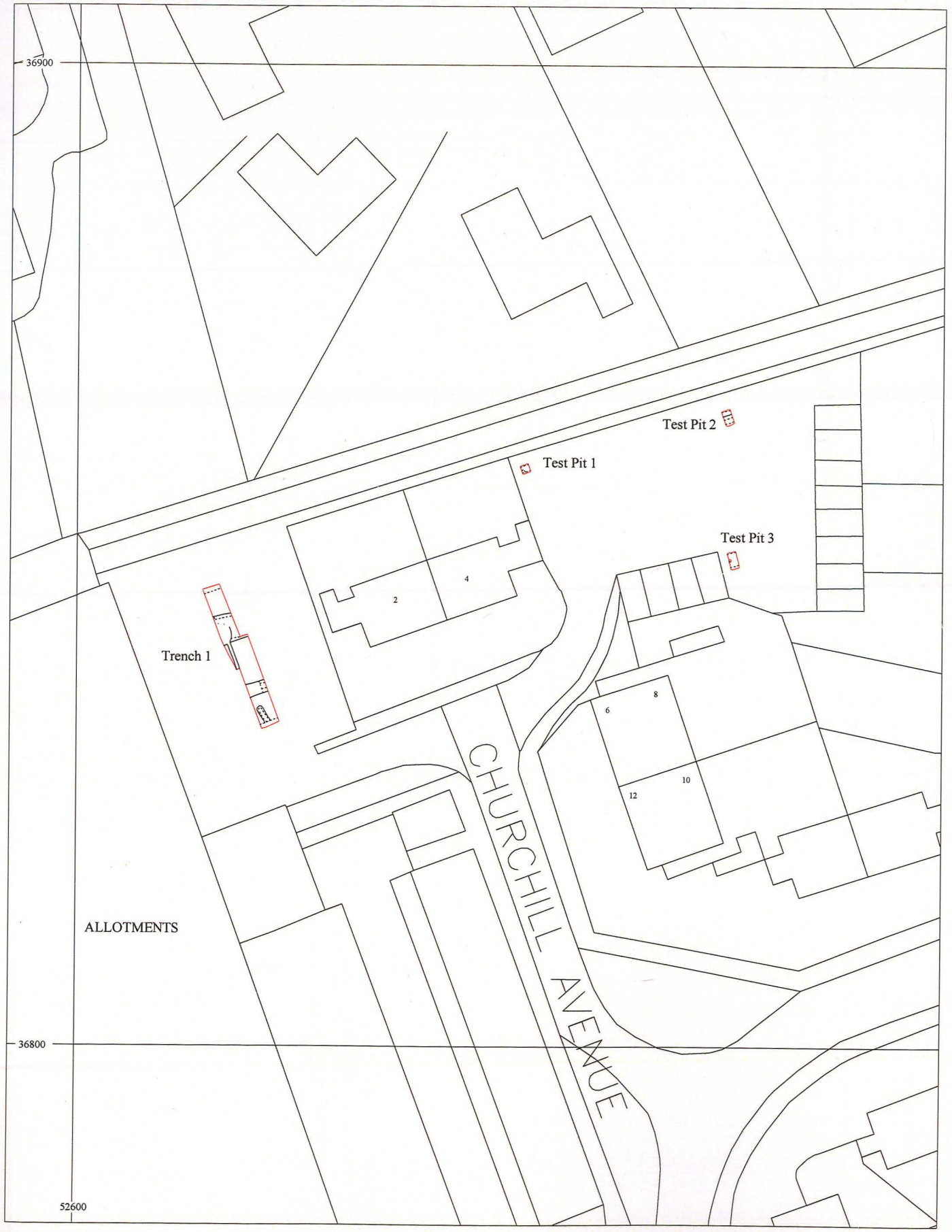


Fig 2. Trench and Test Pit location

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	PROJECT TYPE: Evaluation	ACC. NO: 2008.165 SCALE: 1: 500	DATE: 26/11/08		

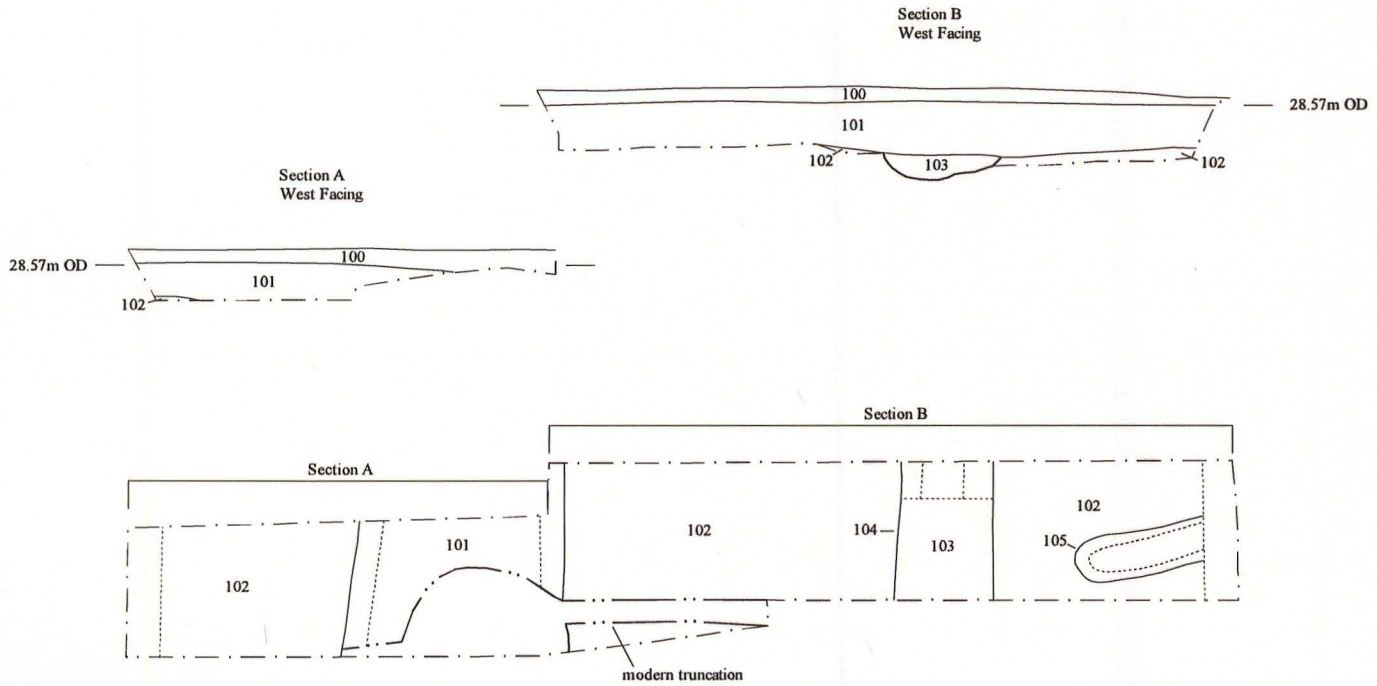


Fig.3 Plan and sections of Trench 1

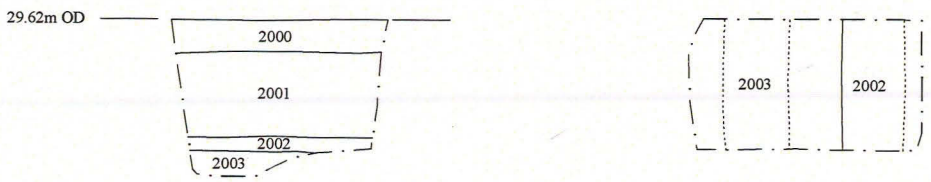
LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES	PROJECT NAME: Churchill Avenue, Horncastle	SITE CODE: CAHO 08	DRAWN BY: GG	REGISTERED IFA ORGANISATION	N
	PROJECT TYPE: Evaluation	ACC. NO: 2008.165 SCALE: 1: 100	DATE: 26/11/08		

Test Pit 1

East facing section

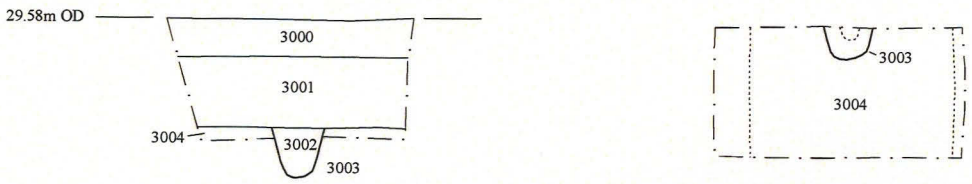
Test Pit 2

East facing section



Test Pit 3

East facing section



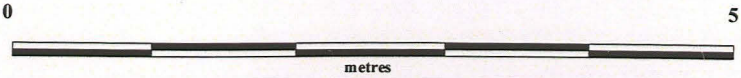


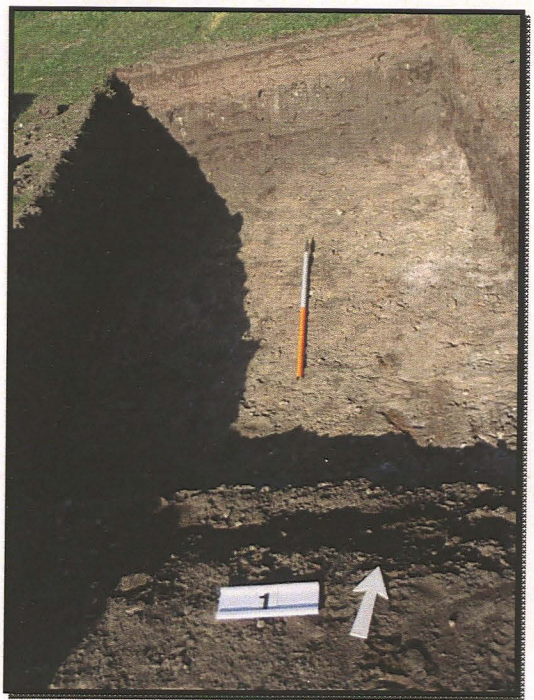
Fig.4 Plans and sections of Test Pits 1-3

LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES	PROJECT NAME: Churchill Avenue, Horncastle	SITE CODE: CAHO 08	DRAWN BY: GG	REGISTERED ORGANISATION IFA	N
	PROJECT TYPE: Evaluation	ACC. NO: 2008.165 SCALE: 1: 50	DATE: 26/11/08		

THE PLATES

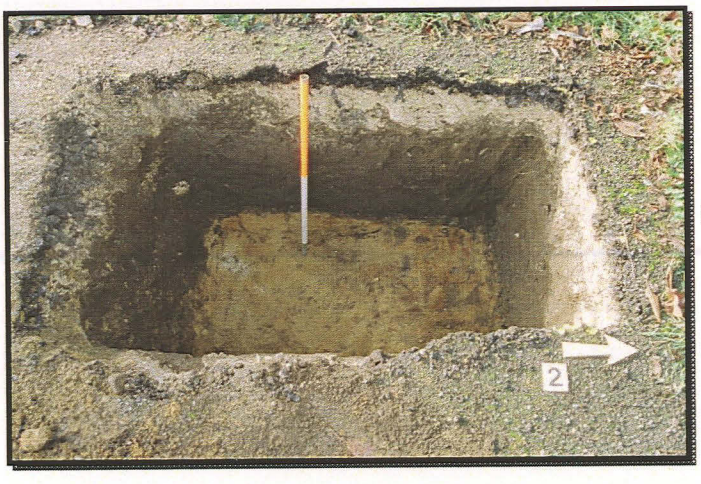
Pl 1. Trench 1, south end, looking south. 1m scale

Pl 2. Trench 1, looking NE. 1m scale



Pl 3. Trench 1, north end, looking north. 1m scale

Pl 4. Test Pit 1, looking west. 1m scale



Pl 5. Test Pit 2, looking west. 1m scale

Pl 6. Test Pit 3, looking west. 1m scale