

Witham Archaeology

A Report to Matthew Gosling Design Consultancy on behalf of Mr Adam Ivory

August 2013



**MAGNOLIA COTTAGE, KIRKGATE,
TYDD ST GILES, CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation

R Trimble

MAGNOLIA COTTAGE, KIRKGATE, TYDD ST GILES, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

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Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation

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MAGNOLIA COTTAGE, KIRKGATE, TYDD ST GILES, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

SUMMARY

This report describes the results of an archaeological trial trench evaluation undertaken by Witham Archaeology at Magnolia Cottage, Kirkgate, Tydd St Giles, Cambridgeshire. The project was commissioned by Matthew Gosling Design Consultancy on behalf of Mr Adam Ivory, in response to a condition of planning permission issued by Fenland District Council.

The site lies immediately adjacent to the route of a probable medieval drove (followed by modern Kirkgate) and in close proximity to previous finds relating to middle Saxon and medieval settlement.

The current investigations revealed an east–west aligned drainage ditch or boundary containing modern finds in its latest fill and a probable roddon (a silted up tidal creek) running parallel with Kirkgate. As roddons typically form areas of higher ground relative to the surrounding landscape, the feature may have influenced the development of the medieval drove represented by Kirkgate.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of an archaeological trial trench evaluation undertaken by Witham Archaeology at Magnolia Cottage, Kirkgate, Tydd St Giles, Cambridgeshire, on the site of a proposed two-storey 4 bedroom house and double garage. The project was commissioned by Matthew Gosling Design Consultancy on behalf of Mr Adam Ivory, in response to a condition of planning permission issued by Fenland District Council. Fieldwork was carried out on 16th July 2013.

The information in this document is presented with the proviso that further data may yet emerge. Witham Archaeology cannot, therefore, be held responsible for any loss, delay or damage, material or otherwise, arising out of this report. The document has been prepared in accordance with the Code of Conduct of the Institute of Archaeologists.

2.0 SITE LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY & GEOLOGY (see Figs. 1 and 2)

The village of Tydd St Giles in the parish of Tydd St Giles and administrative district of Fenland, Cambridgeshire lies approximately 20km west of King’s Lynn and 35km northeast of Peterborough. The site, at NGR TF 4337 1654, is located east of the village core, on the south side of Kirkgate. The development is contained within a plot measuring approximately 625m square. Magnolia Cottage and a timber structure on the southern boundary had been demolished prior to the commencement of fieldwork.

The site lies on drift geology of alluvial clay and silt over solid geology of the Ampthill Clay Formation of the Jurassic period (British Geological Survey, England & Wales, Solid & Drift, 1:50 000).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

There is no record of prehistoric or Romano-British finds in the vicinity of the site. Prehistoric land surfaces in the area are mostly buried beneath deposits of marine and freshwater alluvium.

Evidence relating to middle Saxon occupation was identified during fieldwalking carried out as part of the Fenland Survey (Hall 1996). Areas of dark soil associated with pottery and bone were recorded at

TF 4275 1676 (HER Ref. 09014) and TF 4287 1687 (HER Ref. 09918). A similar area of dark soil at TF 4338 1706 (HER Ref. 10919) may have dated from the same period but lacked dateable finds material.

Map evidence suggests that Kirkgate follows the line of a much wider medieval drove. The outline of the drove is visible in the surviving building line and earthworks (Hall 1996).

Medieval remains including gullies, ditches, pits and a possible posthole were recorded immediately north of Magnolia Cottage, at TF 43362 16651 (HER ref. CB15604), during a trial trench evaluation on the site of the Tydd St Giles Golf Club. Although the recorded features were dated 14th to 15th century unstratified pottery of 13th to 14th century date suggests slightly earlier origins for occupation in the area. A more recent evaluation on land to the north of Kirkgate (MCB19892) at TF 4322 1664 revealed enclosure or drainage ditches and two pits. Two sherds of pottery dated as 12th and 15th century were recovered from stratified contexts (Jefferson 2012 and 2013).

The parish church of St Giles (HER ref. CB14987) includes early 13th century fabric in the chancel arch, nave arcades and the two lowest stages of the tower, together with various later additions and alterations. A watching brief near the core of the village resulted in the discovery of a medieval wall as well as evidence relating to possible pottery production (HER ref. CB15606).

A large ditch located to the north of Kirkgate and running parallel with the road was identified during two recent evaluations (see MCB19892 above, also Dale Trimble, APS *pers comm.*). Post medieval brick fragments were recovered from the easternmost site (MCB 19892).

Kirkgate House located to the west of the site on the south side of Kirkgate is a Grade II listed building dated AD1587 (Heritage List No. 1310201; DCB1756). The Manor House on the opposite side of the road is late 16th or early 17th century with 19th century alterations (Heritage List No. 1125929, HER ref. MCB18467). There is an 18th century barn on land to the east (Heritage List No. 1310201; DCB2016).

The Fenland Survey located two undated burnt areas with associated daub and brick (resembling briquetage) approximately 800m southwest of Magnolia Cottage (HER refs 10918 and 11166).

Magnolia Cottage does not appear on original plans (dated 1812; visible on-line as part of the British Library on-line map gallery) produced for the 1st Series Ordnance Survey map of the area or on the published map of 1824; Kirkgate is shown as a broad road with open land to either side. Magnolia Cottage is visible on both the 1888 and 1902 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 maps, within the extant site boundaries to the north, west and south. The eastern boundary of the property (since removed) lay immediately east of the cottage. The timber structure on the southern boundary is not shown and must therefore have been constructed later in the 20th century.

4.0 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The principal objectives of the project, as set out in a Witham Archaeology specification of 15th July 2013 (revised version), were to:

- *provide information on the presence/absence, nature, date and quality of survival of archaeological deposits and remains which might be contained within the site, at the depth of proposed construction disturbance, and to assess the importance of such remains in terms of their local, regional and national context.*
- *assess the possible scale of development impact on any remains and provide information which might influence development design so that impact on any remains can be avoided or minimised.*
- *provide information that will allow the local planning authority to reconcile development proposals with their policy for preserving archaeological remains and make an informed and reasoned decision on a planning application.*
- *provide site specific archaeological information which (if necessary) would allow for the design and integration of timing and funding of any further archaeological work (or other*

mitigating strategy) which might be required in advance of or during any subsequent development programme.

- produce a project archive for deposition with the appropriate museum and from which the potential for further study and academic research could be assessed.
- provide information for accession to the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (HER).

5.0 METHODOLOGY

The specification required the excavation of a single trench c. 22.5m long by 1.6m wide, placed at right angles to Kirkgate and extending across the footprint of the proposed house. In the event, the proposed trench had to be split in two to avoid an area of hard-standing on the side nearest to Kirkgate. The trenches were 17.35m and 5.4m long.

Topsoil and other recent deposits were removed by a JCB type mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket. Archaeological features identified in plan and representative samples of the trench sides were subsequently cleaned by hand, prior to the part-excavation of features and deposits of potential archaeological origin, to ascertain character, extent and date.

Excavated features were recorded through drawn plans at scale 1:20 or 1:50 as appropriate and section drawings at scale 1:10 or 1:20. The drawn record was augmented by black and white 35mm and digital colour photographs, and written context records on *pro forma* recording sheets. Trenches and reference points used for recording were located in relation to fixed reference points.

6.0 RESULTS (see Figs. 3 and 4)

The earliest deposit recorded on the site was light yellowish brown silt alluvium (016) revealed in the southern part of Trench 2 at around 0.40m below existing ground level.

The alluvium (016) was overlain in the northern part of Trench 2 by light to mid grey silt (015) and greyish/yellowish brown silty clay (013), apparently contained within a large cut [014]. The deposits were partially removed by machine, to provide a section through the upper levels of the southern edge of [014]. The section (see *Plate 2*) revealed a gradually sloping edge consistent with interpretation as an ancient roddon (silted up salt water creek). Deeper explorations in Trench 1 revealed a sequence of deposits at least 1.20m deep comprising mid greyish brown clayey silt (006) overlain by mid grey silt (005), in turn sealed by yellowish grey silt (004). The sequence of silts was sealed by a thick deposit of silty clay (003) identical to (013) in Trench 2. The upper horizons of the silt layers rose in level towards Kirkgate while the overlying clay (003) thickened to the south.

The alluvial deposit was cut in Trench 2 by a large linear cut, [012], aligned east-west. The cut, measuring c. 1.95m wide by 1.00m deep, had steep near vertical sides and a flattish base. The lower levels of the feature were filled by light to mid grey and orange-yellow silt (011), with sand striations indicative of varying phases of sedimentation. The overlying deposit of mottled light to mid grey and orange-yellow silt (010) yielded several fragments of post medieval brick and pottery.

A modern pit [009], partly lined with brick (017), was encountered at the southeast corner of Trench 2. Possible lining on the west side of the feature comprised three courses of unbonded brick, including handmade specimens and at least one fragment of modern frogged and stamped brick. The feature contained a primary fill of loose grey ashy material (008) overlain by mid brownish grey silt (007). The latter deposit included modern glass.

Topsoil averaging around 0.25m thick extended throughout Trenches 1 and 2.

7.0 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Trial trenching on the site of Magnolia Cottage revealed a very large cut feature on the northern side of the site, following the line of Kirkgate. The size of the feature (at least 14m across and 1.2m deep), its

morphology (it had a very gradually sloping southern edge) and the composition of its fills (a sequence of alluvial silts overlain by clay) indicate it as a roddon or silted up tidal creek. Roddons typically formed ridges of elevated ground within the fenland landscape and therefore provided attractive sites for early settlement. At Magnolia Cottage, the alignment with Kirkgate strongly suggests that the route of the medieval drove was influenced by the presence of the probable roddon.

A single sherd of 12th to 14th century pottery occurring as residual in a later context (010) attests to medieval activity in the vicinity of the site (see Appendix B). However, the absence of any clear stratigraphic evidence for occupation in the areas examined suggests that the focus of settlement lay elsewhere – possibly on the north side of Kirkgate as indicated by previous investigations, and/or further to west, nearer to the village core.

Laminated silts and sands (011) in the base of the linear cut [012] indicate a process of natural sedimentation consistent with interpretation as a boundary or drainage ditch. However, the profile of the feature (steep sides and flat base) may indicate a relatively short period of use (before erosion of the sides to a more typical v shape), the former presence of a form of revetment, or rapid backfill suggestive of a pit (possibly elongated/rectilinear in form). The only datable artefacts, occurring in the higher levels of the secondary fill, indicate that the feature was visible as an earthwork or was backfilled at a comparatively late date. However, the feature does not appear to have been depicted on the Ordnance Survey maps of 1888 or 1902.

The modern pit [009] at the southeast corner of Trench 2 is located immediately west of the demolished timber outbuilding and may have functioned as a soakaway during the period when Magnolia Cottage was occupied.

In conclusion, the results of trial trenching at Tydd St Giles indicate a low potential for archaeologically significant deposits. In particular, there was no evidence to suggest Saxon or medieval occupation comparable to that identified during previous investigations on the north side of Kirkgate.

8.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author of this report would like to thank Matthew Gosling, Matthew Gosling Architectural Design and Adam Ivory for their assistance in ensuring the successful completion of this project. Thanks are also due to Kasia Gdaniec of the Historic Environment Team, Cambridgeshire County Council for advice provided at various stages of the project, to staff at the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record for assistance in locating information relating to the site and Alex Beeby and Gary Taylor of APS for production of the finds report.

9.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Jefferson, N 2012 *Archaeological Evaluation on Land East of Potential House, Tydd St Giles*. Archaeological Project Services Report No. 112/12

Jefferson, N 2013 *Archaeological Investigation (Strip, Map and Sample) on Land East of Potential House, Tydd St Giles, Cambridgeshire*. Archaeological Project Services Report No. 79/12

Medlycott, M (Ed) 2011 *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a Revised Framework for the East of England*. EAA Occ Paper No. 24

10.0 PROJECT/ ARCHIVE DETAILS

10.1 Project Information

EVENT NO.: ECB4002

PLANNING APPLICATION No.: F/YR13/0210/F

FIELD OFFICER: R. Trimble

NGR: TF 4337 1654

CIVIL PARISH: Tydd St Giles

SMR No.:

DATE OF INTERVENTION: 16th July 2013

TYPE OF INTERVENTION: Trial Trench Evaluation

UNDERTAKEN FOR: Matthew Gosling Architectural Design on behalf of Mr Adam Ivory

10.2 Archive Details

PRESENT LOCATION: Witham Archaeology, Unit 6, Sleaford Station Business Centre, Station Road, Sleaford Lincolnshire, NG34 7RG

FINAL LOCATION: Cambridgeshire Archaeology Store

MUSEUM ACCESSION No.: -

PROPOSED ACCESSION DATE: - September 2013

The Site Archive Comprises:

Context Records	17
Plans at Scale 1:50	1
Section Drawings at Scale 1:20	2
Section Drawings at Scale 1:10	2
Black and White photographs	18
Digital Photographs	31
Set of Site Notes	1

COLOUR PLATES



Plate 1: General view of Trench 2 looking north; 2m and 1m scale



Plate 2: Section 4, looking west; 2m and 0.5m scales

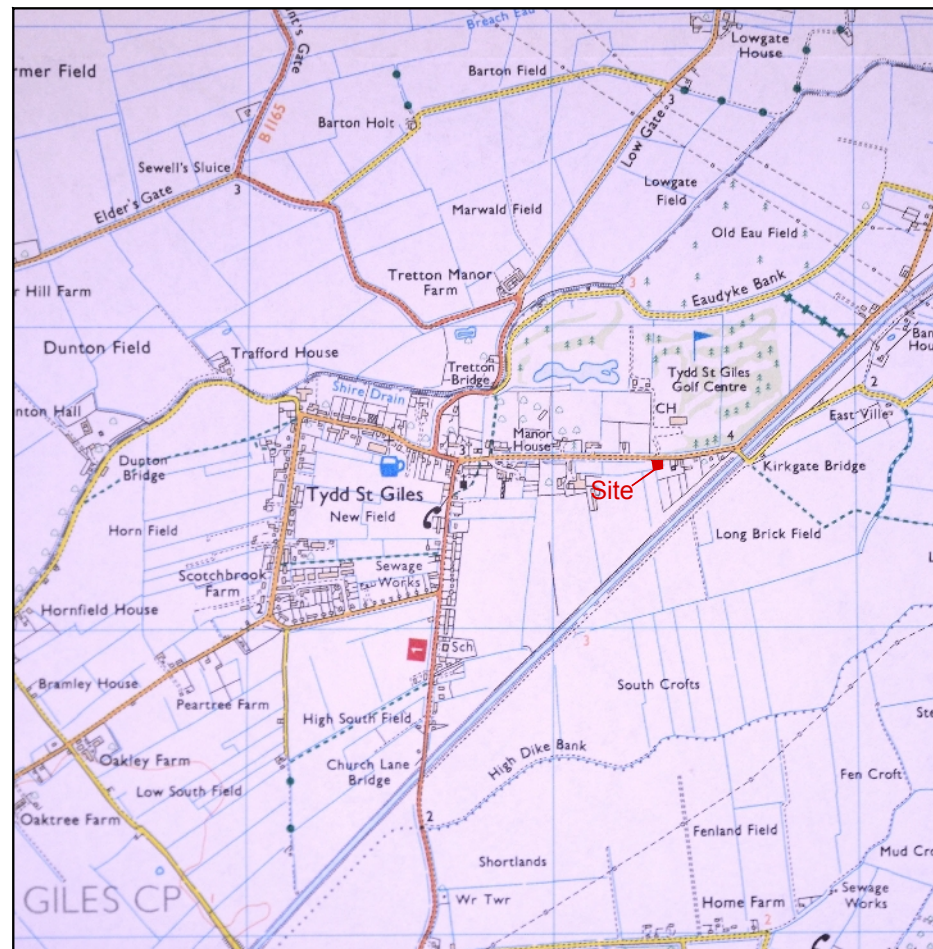
COLOUR PLATES (Cont.)



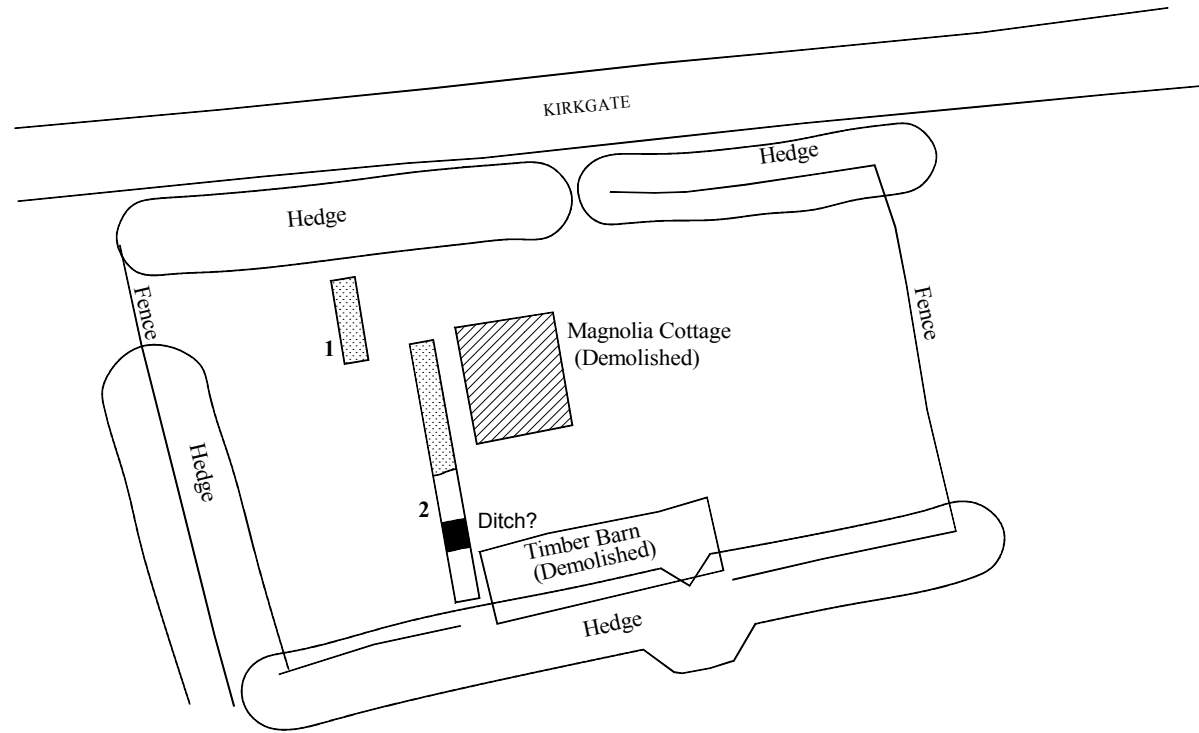
Plate 3: General view of Trench 1, Section 1 looking northwest; 1m scale




Plate 1: Section 2, cut [012], looking south-southeast; 1m and 2m scales



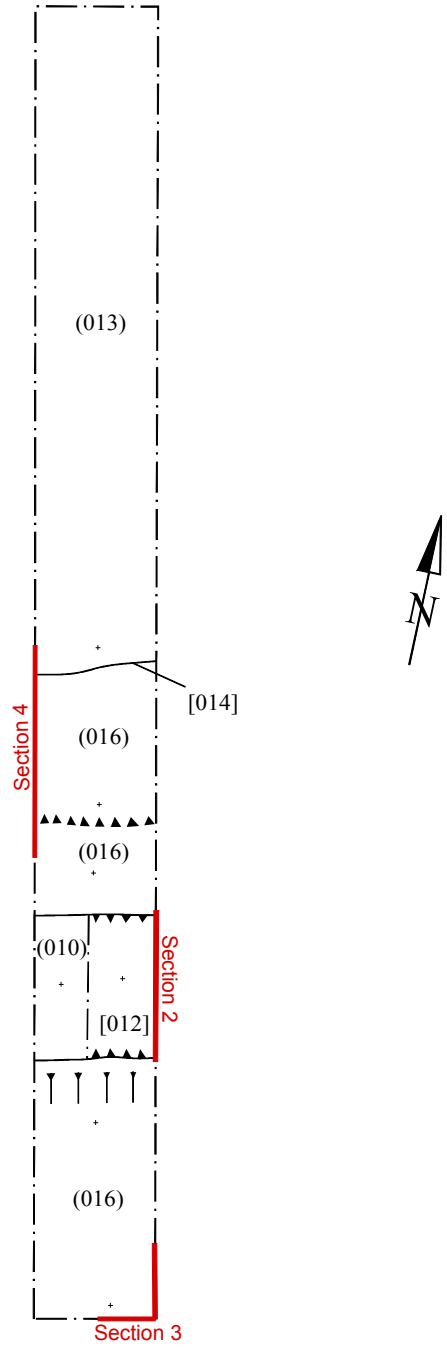
Produced from the Explorer 1:25 000 Ordnance Survey map with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright
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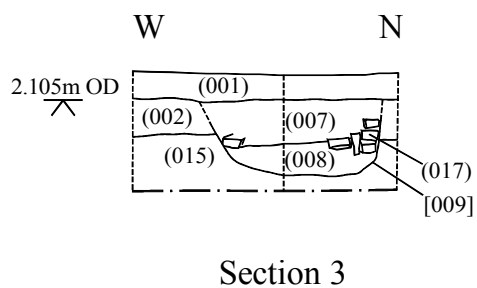
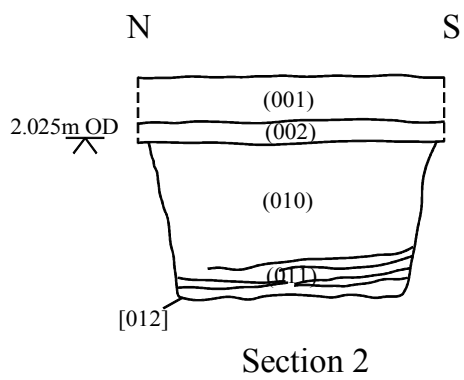
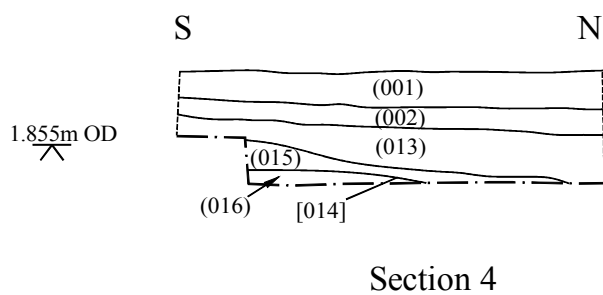
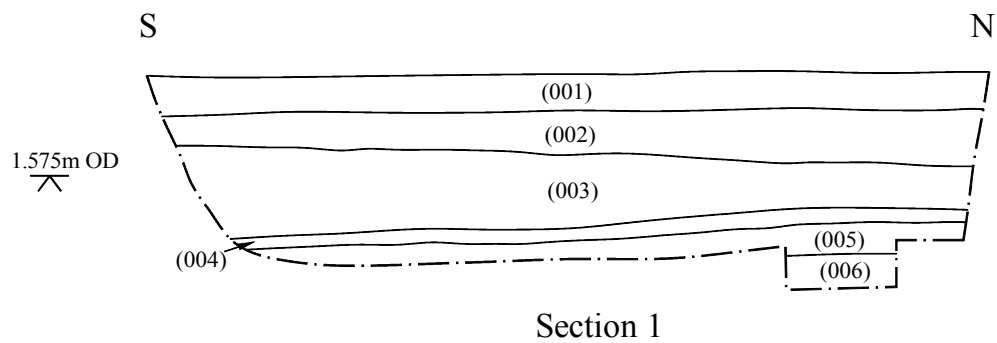


Key
 Deposits in Roddon?



Based upon a plan supplied by Matthew Gosling Architectural Design





APPENDIX A - CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

<i>Context</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Description</i>
001	Topsoil	Moderately compact, mid brownish grey silty sand; average 0.25m thick
002	Layer – subsoil/relict ploughsoil	Moderately compact/friable, mid greyish brown sandy clay (40/60) containing occasional fine roots; 0.12 - 0.40m thick
003	Deposit within [014]?	Firm/compact mid greyish/yellowish brown slightly sandy, silty clay (20/80)
004	Deposit within [014]?	Soft, light yellowish grey silt, 0.10m thick
005	Deposit within [014]?	Soft, mid grey silt, 0.20m thick where recorded
006	Deposit within [014]?	Soft (firmer than 004/005), mid greyish brown clayey silt (30/70), 0.23m+ thick where recorded
007	Fill of [017]	Moderately compact/friable mid brownish grey silt, 0.30m deep (max.)
008	Fill of [009]	Loose grey ash, 0.23m thick (max.)
009	Cut – contains possible structure [017]	Steep sides and concave base, at least 0.65m E-W x 0.55m N-S x 0.50m deep
010	Fill of [012]	Firm, mottled light to mid grey and orange-yellow silt containing occasional pot and brick fragments, 0.80m thick
011	Fill of [012]	Firm, light to mid grey and orange-yellow silt with bright orange/buff sand striations, 0.25 thick (max.)
012	Ditch or drain	Linear, aligned east-west; 1.95m wide x 1m deep; steep sides (near vertical) and a flattish base
013	Deposit within [014]	As (003), extending 10.00m+ north-south and at least 0.30m thick.
014	Edge of possible roddon	Southern side of large dip extending to north; very gradually sloping; extends from c. 8.70m from the southern end of the main trench to at least the northern boundary of the site
015	Deposit within [014]	Soft, light to mid grey silt; recorded area is 0.20m thick max.
016	Alluvium	Soft, light yellowish brown silt, at least 0.10m thick
017	Modern brick-lined pit – probable soakaway	Bricks (3 courses high?) forming possible lining on the west side of a pit. Single brick on the east side may represent a corresponding lining. Not bonded.

APPENDIX B – FINDS REPORTS

POST ROMAN POTTERY

Alex Beeby

Introduction and Methodology

The material was recorded at archive level in accordance with the guidelines laid out in Slowikowski *et al.* (2001). The pottery codename (Cname) used are in accordance with the Post Roman pottery type series for Lincolnshire, as published in Young *et al.* (2005), which also covers surrounding counties.

Condition and Provenance

Three sherds from two vessels, weighing 24 grams were recovered during the investigation. All three pieces are fresh but small. The material came from fill (010) within vertical sided linear feature [012].

Range

There are two rim fragments from a 18th or 19th century vessel in Slipware (SLIP) and a piece from a further vessel in Medieval Bourne Ware (BOUA).

Table 1, The Post-Roman Pottery

Tr	Cxt	Cname	Full Name	Sub Fab	Form	Part	Comment	Date	NoS	NoV	W(g)
2	010	BOUA	Bourne Medieval Ware	B	?	BS		M12th-14th	1	1	6
2	010	SLIP	Miscellaneous Slipware		Flat	Rims	White slip on buff	18th-19th	2	1	18
Total									3	2	24

Potential

The material should be retained as part of the site archive; it is in a stable condition and will pose no problems for long term storage.

CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL

By Alex Beeby

Introduction

All the material was recorded at archive level in accordance with the guidelines laid out by the Archaeological Ceramic Building Materials Group (2002). A total of ten fragments of ceramic building material, weighing 3246 grams was recovered from the site.

Methodology

The material was laid out and viewed in context order. Fragments were counted and weighed within each context. The ceramic building material was examined visually and using x20 magnification. This information was then added to an Access database. An archive list of the ceramic building material is included in Table 2 below.

Condition

The condition of the material is mixed but generally very fragmentary. A single brick is almost complete.

Results

Table 2, Ceramic Building Material Archive

Tr	Cxt	Cname	Full Name	Fabric	Comment	Date	NoF	W(g)
2	007	BRK	Brick	Oxidised; fine	Handmade; sooted over break; deep stacking scars on one stretcher; crude; no obvious striking	18th-19th	1	2328

Tr	Cxt	Cname	Full Name	Fabric	Comment	Date	NoF	W(g)
2	007	MODERN BRICK	Modern brick		Modern moulded brick; frogged	20th	1	244
2	010	BRK	Brick	Oxidised; fine calcareous	Fragments of "Fenland type" Post Medieval brick; one large piece with strike marks; almost certainly more than one brick represented	16th-19th	7	288
2	017	MODERN BRICK	Modern brick		Modern moulded brick; frogged; impressed with "WHITTL.."	20th	1	386
Total							10	3246

Provenance

Ceramic building material was recovered from the structure of brick lined feature [017] as well as fill (007) within this feature. A single fragment of brick also came from fill (010) within vertical sided linear cut [012].

Range

As well as two pieces of modern material from structure [017] and fill (007), a range of Post Medieval and/or Early Modern brick fragments was recovered. A single additional brick, from fill (007) is probably 19th century in date or slightly earlier. The material from [012] comprises largely undiagnostic small fragments of the common 'Fenland' post Medieval brick fabric type.

Potential

There is no potential for further work. The assemblage is suitable for discard, although permission for disposal will need to be obtained. Should the material be kept, it is in a stable condition and will pose no problems for long term storage.

Summary

A small assemblage of Post Medieval to Early Modern and Modern ceramic building material was recovered during the evaluation.

OTHER FINDS

By Gary Taylor

Introduction

Three other finds weighing a total of 7g were recovered.

Condition

The other finds are in moderate-good condition. The metal items are corroded.

Results

Table 3, Other Materials

Cxt	Material	Description	NoF	W (g)	Date
007	glass	colourless window, 20 th century	1	4	20 th century
	copper alloy	sheet, with a ridge set along and perpendicular to plain of sheet	1	2	
	lead	thin sheet	1	1	

Provenance

The other finds were recovered from the fill (007) of a brick lined feature [017].

Range

The other finds are of glass and metal. A piece of modern window was recovered. The copper alloy is of obscure identification. However, the ridge set at right angles to the larger section of sheet could be the lower part of a tang. It therefore seems likely that this object is a small fragment of a handled tool, perhaps a small fine plasterer's trowel, or similar. The lead sheet is unidentifiable but is too thin for roofing lead.

Potential

The other finds are of limited potential.

Spot Date

(007) – 20th century

(010) – 18th-19th century

(017) – 20th century

Abbreviations

BS	Body sherd
CXT	Context
NoS	Number of sherds
NoV	Number of vessels
W (g)	Weight (grams)

References

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