

Witham Archaeology

A Report to J.J. & J. Hartley
December 2008



**13A SUTTONS LANE,
DEEPING GATE, PETERBOROUGH**

Archaeological Watching Brief

R Trimble

13A SUTTONS LANE, DEEPING GATE, PETERBOROUGH

WA Site Code: DGSL08
OASIS ID: withamar1-51579
Planning Application No.: 05/00060/REM
NGR: TF 14821 09479

Archaeological Watching Brief

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13A SUTTONS LANE, DEEPING GATE, PETERBOROUGH

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

SUMMARY

This report describes the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by Witham Archaeology during groundwork relating to the construction of a new bungalow and garage at 13A Suttons Lane, Deeping Gate, Peterborough. The work, commissioned Architects JJ and J Hartley, was carried out in response to a condition of planning permission issued by Peterborough City Council.

The site lies at the core of the settlement at Deeping Gate Deeping, in close proximity to the River Welland. To the south of the site, cropmarks showing a probable Bronze Age burial mound and Iron Age or Romano-British enclosures have been recorded from aerial photographs, while work on the Market Deeping bypass (just over 1km to the southwest) revealed a wide range of prehistoric to Romano-British remains. The Car Dyke – a channel or watercourse believed to be of Romano-British date – passes to the east of the site. Documentary records indicate settlement at Deeping Gate from the medieval period onwards.

The watching brief produced no evidence of archaeologically significant remains. Natural deposits of sand and gravel were located at a depth of approximately 900mm below existing ground level, overlain by a substantial depth of clay alluvium. The only potential evidence of archaeological activity consisted of a layer sealing alluvium in parts of the garage plot at northern end of site. The latter deposit, which was not dated, may have represented the fill of a negative feature – possibly a ditch, cut by the foundation trench at an oblique angle. A small pit located on the eastern side of the plot contained a topsoil-like fill indicative of a comparatively recent origin.

The project archive will be accessioned to Peterborough Museum and Art Gallery.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by Witham Archaeology during groundwork relating to the construction of a bungalow and associated garage at 13A Suttons Lane, Deeping Gate, Peterborough. The work was commissioned by Architects JJ and J Hartley in response to a condition of planning permission (Ref. 05/00060/REM, Condition No. 6) issued by Peterborough City Council. All excavations for the foundations of the bungalow were carried out on 20th June 2008.

The information contained in this report 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 report has been prepared in accordance with the Code of Conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists and the document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

2.0 SITE LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY & GEOLOGY (see Fig 1)

The hamlet and parish of Deeping Gate in the administrative district of Peterborough Unitary Authority lies approximately 13km east of Stamford and 15km north of Peterborough, on the southern bank of the River Welland and adjacent to the Lincolnshire County boundary. The plot, measuring 28 by 12m lies to the north of Suttons Lane and south of properties fronting the River Welland, at NGR TF 14821 09479.

The site lies upon drift geology of recent alluvium overlying first terrace river gravels, which in turn extend across a solid geology of Jurassic Kellaways clay (BGS 1984). The topography of the immediate area of the site is generally level, at an elevation of c. 6m OD.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The landscape surrounding the site is rich in archaeological remains ranging from prehistoric to modern. Sites within a 1km radius of the site include a ring ditch (probably a Bronze Age burial mound) identified from aerial photographs (HER ref. 51139) as well as cropmarks of Romano-British and or Iron Age enclosures (HER ref. 08539) and a prehistoric triple ditch boundary (Her ref. 51136). The potential of the wider area around Deeping Gate is emphasised by the range of sites, from prehistoric to Romano-British, found during fieldwork carried out in advance of the Market Deeping bypass (passing just over 1km to the southwest of the site). Finds included Bronze Age burials (Cope Faulkner and Trimble 1999; Trimble 2000).

The Car Dyke – a channel or watercourse believed to be Romano-British in date – passes to the east of Deeping Gate. The feature, which extends along the western edge of the fens, between the River Witham at Washingborough near Lincoln, to the River Nene at Peterborough, has been variously interpreted as a transport canal, catchwater, or imperial estate boundary (Cope-Faulkner and Simmons 2004).

A settlement at Deeping Gate is first mentioned in the close rolls of 1390, where it is referred to a *Depyngate* or ‘the road to Deeping’ (Gover *et al* 1933, 234). During the medieval period, a chapel dedicated to St Mary (HER ref. 02254) lay to the east of the site, at a distance of approximately 250m. The nearby stone bridge (Grade II listed) across the River Welland is dated to 1651, while the settlement contains a number of Grade II listed cottages (mostly 17th/18th Century) extending along the riverbank.

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by Archaeological Project Services in 2003, on land to the east of the site, at No. 17 Suttons Lane (Cope Faulkner 2003). The project identified a sequence of alluvial deposits overlying river terrace gravels together with possible evidence of a palaeochannel, but failed to locate any archaeologically significant features or artefacts.

4.0 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The principal objectives of the project, as set out in a Witham Archaeology specification of 4th June 2008, were to:

- *allow the preservation by record of any surviving archaeological deposits and artefacts exposed by the development groundwork within the constraints imposed by the contractor’s working methods, programme and development design.*
- *produce a project archive for deposition with the appropriate museum together with a client report.*
- *provide information for accession to the City’s Historic Environment Record.*

5.0 METHODOLOGY

Following site clearance to remove vegetation from the site, all excavations for foundations were carried out from existing ground level, using a Volvo BL71 Powershift backhoe loader. Foundation trenches were generally 950mm deep by 450mm wide.

All trenches were visually inspected to determine the presence/absence of archaeological features and deposits. Where clear evidence was encountered, of features of archaeological origin, more intensive investigations were carried out, included hand cleaning of the trench sides and the production of section drawings and context records.

A series of colour photographs details the recorded stratigraphy, as well as the progress of groundwork operations. Representative section drawings were produced at scale 1:20, while written context descriptions were made for each unit of stratigraphy.

6.0 RESULTS (see Figs. 2 and 3)

River terrace deposits of orange-brown, coarse sand and gravel (007) were intermittently visible in the foundation trenches, with their top surface extending in places, to 50mm above the lower limit of excavation. In general, flooding of the trenches occurred in areas where the gravels were exposed.

Terrace gravels were overlain by a c. 0.75m depth of alluvial clay. Where examined in detail (in Section 1 on the eastern side of plot), the clay could be separated into a lower deposit of stiff, very light yellowish brown slightly sandy/silty clay (005), overlain by stiff mid grey and light yellowish brown clay (004).

On the southern side of the garage plot (Section 2) the clay alluvium was overlain by stiff, mid grey-brown sandy clay, 0.50m thick (max), containing occasional animal bone to 100mm, angular stone to 30mm, and limestone flecks. The deposit (undated) may have been contained within a linear feature (ditch?) cut obliquely by the garage foundation trench.

On the eastern side of the house plot (Section 1) clay (004) was cut by a pit [003]. The pit was 1.0m wide by 0.38m deep and had a bowl-shaped profile. It was filled by moderately compact, mid greyish brown sandy silty clay (002) containing moderately frequent small charcoal flecks and fragments as well as small grits.

The topsoil (001) was sandier than (002) but was otherwise identical. Across the site topsoil ranged in depth between 0.15 - 0.20m thick.

7.0 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

River terrace of sand and gravel lay at a depth of approximately 900mm below existing ground level, overlain by clay alluvium. The only evidence of potential archaeological activity comprised a layer (106) overlying clay in the garage plot at northern end of site. The deposit (not dated) may have lain within a linear cut, truncated at an oblique angle by the foundation trench. A pit [103] located on the eastern side of the plot contained a topsoil-like deposit and was almost certainly modern in origin.

To conclude, the watching brief produced little evidence of archaeologically significant deposits. The results of were, therefore, largely consistent with the negative findings of a recent evaluation by Archaeological Project Services (see above), on land at No. 17 Suttons Lane.

8.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author of this report would like to thank Mr JJ Hartley, for assistance in ensuring the successful completion of this project. Thanks are also due to Rebecca Casa-Hatton, Peterborough City Council Archaeology service, for assistance in locating information on Historical Environment Record Information.

9.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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10.0 PROJECT/ ARCHIVE DETAILS

10.1 Project Information

SITE CODE: DGSL08

OASIS ID: withamar1-51579

PLANNING APPLICATION No.: 05/00060/REM

FIELD OFFICER: R Trimble

NGR: TF 14821 09479

CIVIL PARISH: Deeping Gate

SMR No.:

DATE OF INTERVENTION: 20th June 2008

TYPE OF INTERVENTION: Watching Brief

UNDERTAKEN FOR: J.J. & J. Hartley, Architects

10.2 Archive Details

PRESENT LOCATION: Witham Archaeology, 65 Grantham Road, Sleaford, Lincolnshire, NG34 7NG

FINAL LOCATION: Peterborough Museum and Art Gallery, Priestgate, Peterborough, PE1 1LF

MUSEUM ACCESSION No.:

ACCESSION DATE: -

The Site Archive Comprises:

Context Records	7
Section Drawings at Scale 1:20	2
Colour Print Photographs	12
Set of digital photographs	1
Set of Site Notes	1

It is intended that transfer of the archive in accordance with requirements contained in the document 'Peterborough Museum and Art Gallery: Standards for Archaeological Archive and Preparation' will be undertaken following completion of this project.

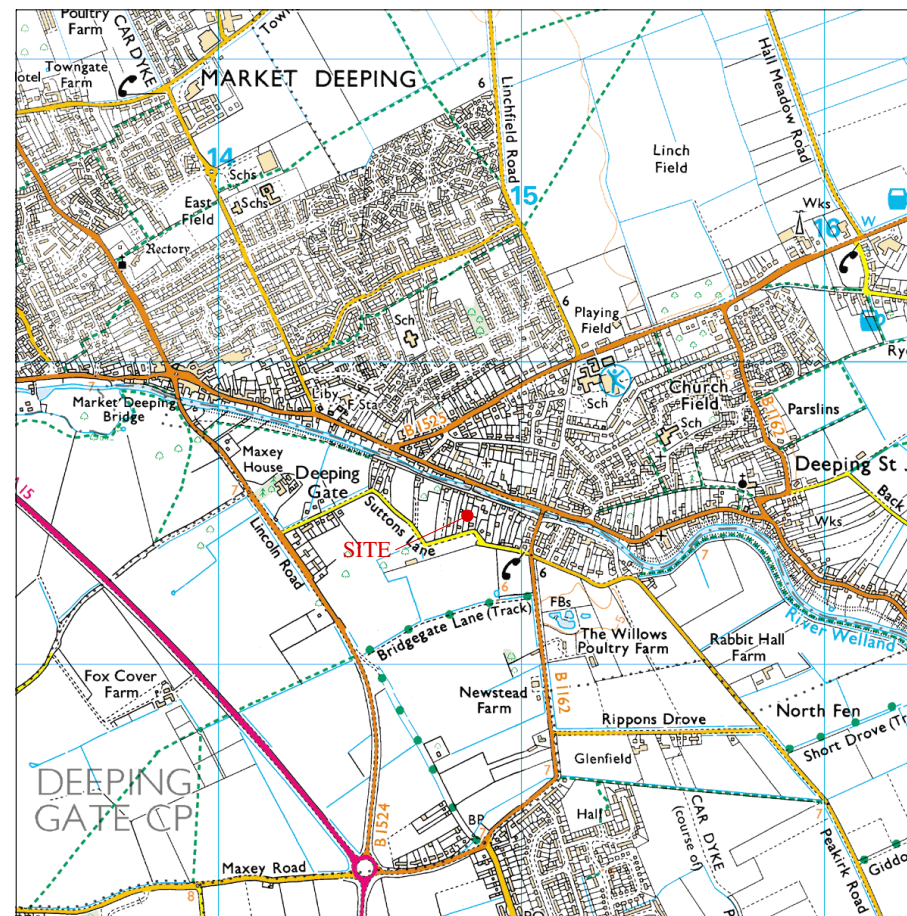
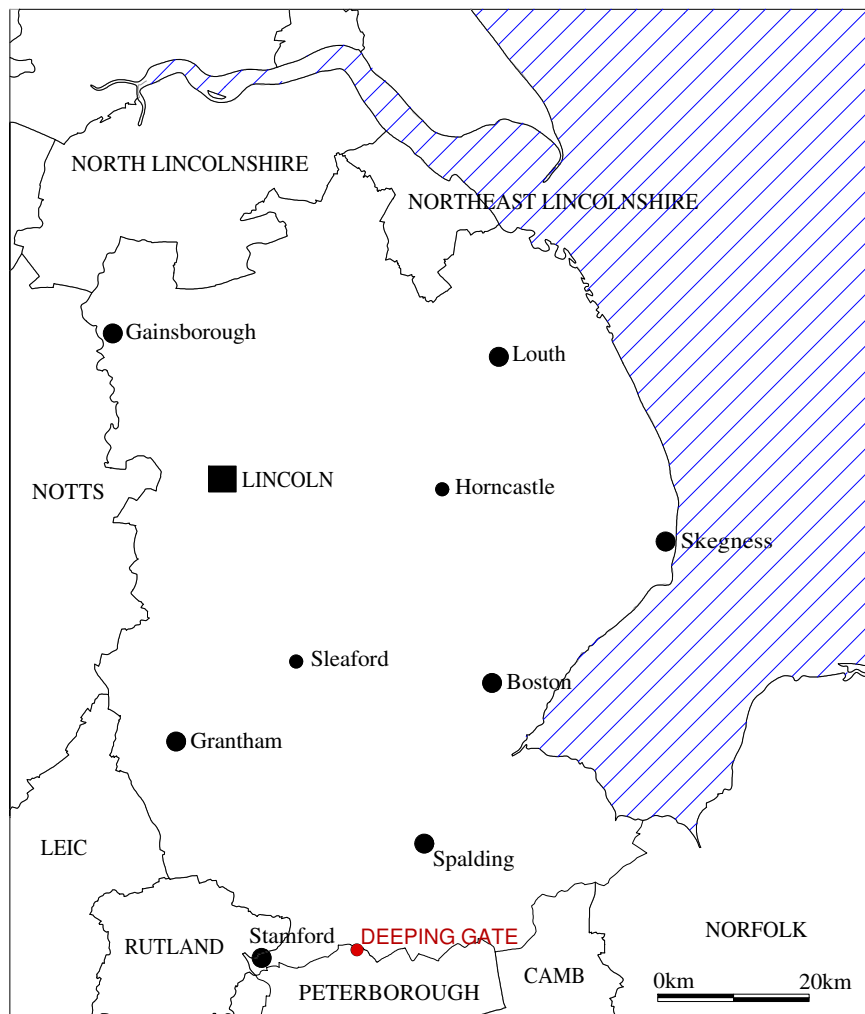
COLOUR PLATES



Plate 1 – General view showing deposits in the main north-south trench, looking south

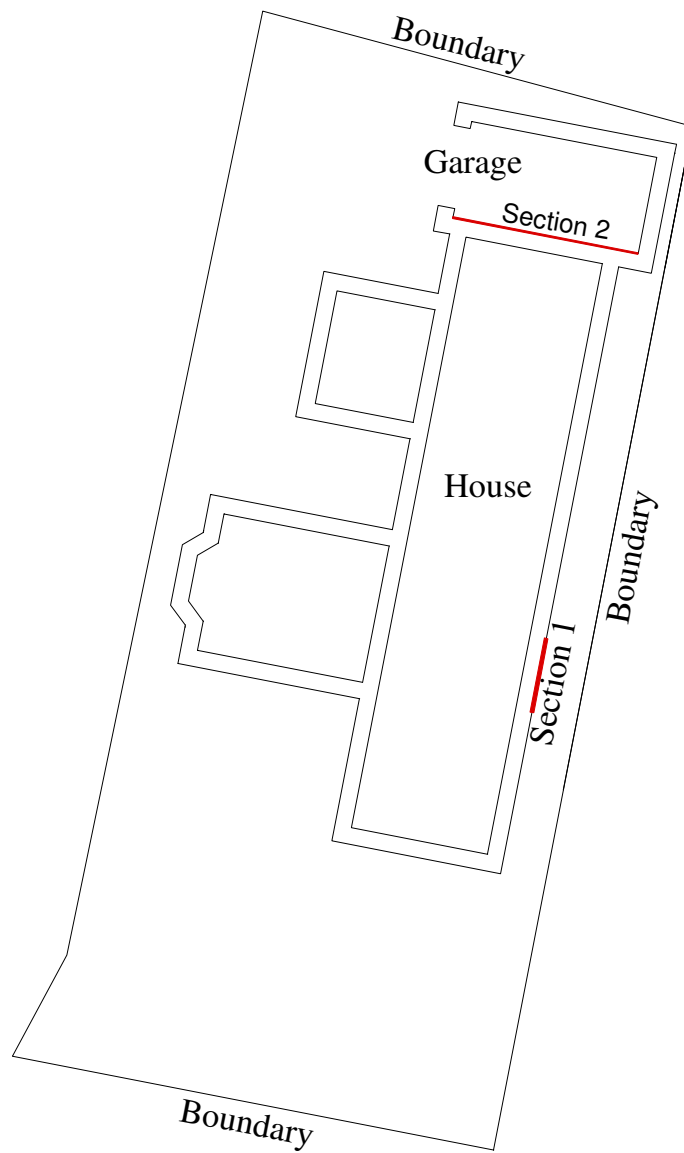


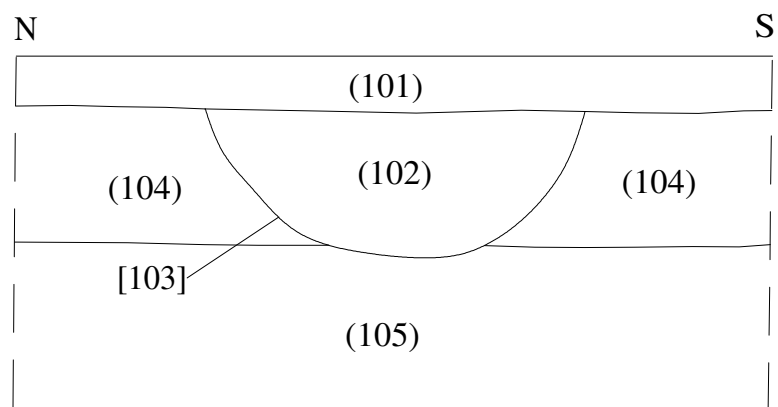
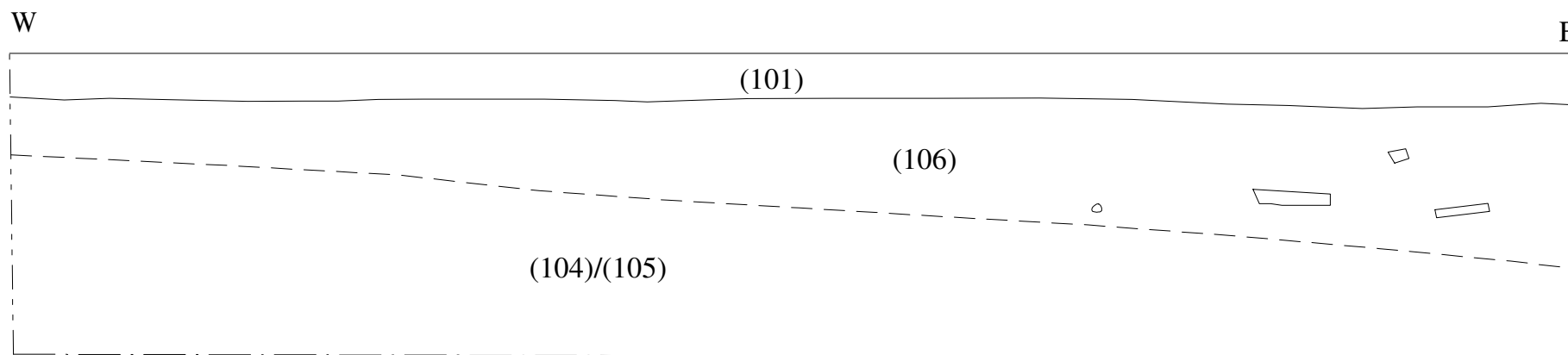
Plate 2 – View showing Section 2, looking east (1m scale)



0km 1km

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APPENDIX A - CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

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