

Witham Archaeology

A Report to Mr Simon Jennings
May 2011



**LAND TO THE REAR OF SOUTH RIDING,
ESSENDINE ROAD, RYHALL, RUTLAND**

Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Excavation

R Trimble

LAND TO THE REAR OF SOUTH RIDING, ESSENDINE ROAD, RYHALL, RUTLAND

Museum Archive Accession No.: OAKRM 2010.14
Planning Application No.: FUL/2010/0121/JM
NGR: TF 0361 1151

Strip, Map and Plan Excavation

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LAND TO THE REAR OF SOUTH RIDING, ESSENDINE ROAD, RYHALL, RUTLAND

STRIP MAP AND PLAN EXCAVATION

SUMMARY

This report describes the results of a programme of strip, map and sample undertaken by Witham Archaeology during groundworks relating to the construction of a two-storey house and adjoining double garage on land to the rear of South Riding, Essendine Road, Ryhall, Rutland. Fieldwork was carried out on 24th and 25th May 2010.

The site lies in close proximity to rectilinear cropmarks believed to represent a prehistoric field system. A Roman pottery scatter was found in the 1960's, on land immediately west of the development.

Two undated gullies found on the western side of the site could form part of a probable prehistoric field system visible on aerial photographs. No artefacts were found on the site.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of a programme of strip, map and sample undertaken by Witham Archaeology during groundworks relating to the construction of a two-storey house and adjoining double garage on land to the rear of South Riding, Essendine Road, Ryhall. The archaeological work was commissioned by Mr Simon Jennings to comply with the requirements of a condition of planning consent issued by the local planning authority (FUL/2010/0121/JM). Fieldwork was carried on 24th and 25th May 2010 .

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 Fig. 1)

The village and parish of Ryhall lie within the administrative district of Rutland, at a distance of c.5km north of Stamford.

South Riding is located to the north of the village, on the west side of Essendine Road (NGR TF 03611151). The site is situated within gardens to the rear of the existing property, being approximately square and totalling approximately 0.19m² in area. The area was mostly under grass prior to the commencement of groundworks.

The site lies upon Jurassic argillaceous (clay) rocks with subordinate sandstone and limestone bedrock (Rutland Formation), with no overlying superficial deposits (British Geological Survey of Great Britain, Stamford, Sheet 157). It is situated on a south facing slope, overlooking the River Gwash, at elevations of between c. 46.5 and 48m above Ordnance Datum.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The parish of Ryhall is mostly low-lying, falling from Ryhall heath to the River Gwash. Together with Belmesthorpe, the parish is said to have been given in 664 by Wulfere, King of Mercia, to the monastery of Medehamsted. In the time of Edward the Confessor it was given to Peterborough and in 1086 it was held by Judith, niece of William the Conqueror. The village extends across land on both sides of the river, the greater portion lying on the south side where the church is located. The Green

Dragon Inn has a vaulted cellar dated to the 13th century. It has been suggested that the site of the inn was previously occupied by a manor house (Page 1935).

The Church of St John dates from around AD1200. The tower and spire are thirteenth century, the porch is fourteenth century and the remainder of the building is mostly fifteenth century (HER Ref. MLE5690).

Aerial photographs show a complex of rectilinear cropmarks extending north and west of South Riding. The complex, which may be interpreted as forming part of a later prehistoric field system, includes linear features running north-south and east-west towards the north-western corner of the site (HER ref. MLE5688). A scatter of Roman pottery was found during the 1960's, on land immediately west of the development (HER Ref. MLE8115).

4.0 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The principal objectives of the project, as set out in a Witham Archaeology specification of 16th May 2010, were to:

- identify, investigate and record any archaeological features exposed by excavations within the footprint of the proposed house and garage
- advance understanding of the significance of heritage assets which might be present on the site
- produce a project archive for deposition with the appropriate museum, where it would be available as a resource for further study and academic research
- provide information for accession to the Leicestershire Historic Environment Record (HER)

5.0 METHODOLOGY

In accordance with the specification, general ground reduction was preceded by the excavation of an evaluation trench *c.* 1.6m wide, running along the length of the garage on the eastern side of the plot. After a negative result from the first phase of work, the 1.6m wide strip was (with the agreement of the groundwork contractors) extended around the perimeter of the house-plot. Following the discovery of possible features of archaeological origin on the northern side of the area, the full extent of the house-plot area was stripped under archaeological supervision, to the top level of geological deposits. All archaeologically significant features identified across the stripped area were further defined by hand-cleaning and then excavated within sample areas.

An intermittent watching brief was maintained during the subsequent excavation of foundation trenches, to provide for the recovery of further evidence relating to the already excavated features, or to hitherto undisclosed deposits and features. Foundation trenches on the northern side of the plot were excavated to a depth of 2.0m below existing ground level (required by the local authority's building inspector in recognition of the presence of adjacent hedging), with a reduction in depth to the south, on the lower extent of the slope.

The archaeological record of the site includes sequences of monochrome and colour photographs detailing specific features and deposits and features, as well as the progress of development groundworks. Plans and sections were drawn at scales of 1:50 and 1:20 respectively, while individual context descriptions were made on *pro-forma* recording sheets.

6.0 RESULTS (Fig. 2)

A representative record of geological deposits present across the site, was made at the north-western corner of the house-plot. Here, the primary deposit was a dark grey clay at least 300mm thick (extending to 2m below existing ground level). It was overlain by mixed chalk and clay, 300mm thick, which was in turn sealed by a mottled brown and mid grey clay 200mm thick. The remaining stratigraphy comprised mottled brown and dark grey clay (200mm), yellow brown clay (300mm), limestone brash (200mm), mid brown sandy clay soil (300mm) and finally a layer of topsoil 100mm

thick. Observations over the southern extent of the same trench revealed a shallowing of the clay deposits, to a combined depth of around 600mm, while limestone brash was exposed at a depth of around 900mm below existing ground level.

Investigations across the stripped surface revealed a linear gully [002] running approximately southwest to northeast across the area. The feature extended over a distance of around 8.5m from the western limit of excavation narrowing progressively towards the east (from 0.50m to 0.30m wide). Excavation within a slot 0.80m wide revealed steep sides breaking quite sharply to a concave base. The gully, at this point, was 0.22m deep and was filled by a mid brown sandy clay (001).

A north-south feature, [004], extended from the northern limit of excavation to meet [002]. Excavation revealed gradually sloping sides, a broad, slightly concave base, and dimensions of 0.40m wide by 0.12m deep; it contained mid brown sandy clay (003). The apparent connection between [002] and [004] implies a common origin, possibly as part of a field system. However, investigations at their junction indicated that [004] may have been cut by [002]. Clay deposits (see Fig. 2) seen in plan in the area to the south of [002] were initially noted as the possible fills in a linear cut, but further investigation and observations made during the excavation of the adjacent foundation trench indicated that these were geological deposits outcropping from beneath the limestone brash on the lower extent of the hillside.

A stone filled land drain (presumed to be comparatively recent in date) lay to the south of [002]. The feature was 300mm wide and lay on a southeast to northwest alignment.

There was no evidence of artefactual remains on the site.

7.0 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The alignments of gullies [002] and [004] indicate that they could form part of probable field systems (interpreted as prehistoric) represented by cropmarks visible on aerial photographs of the area. Both features were undated. The archaeological investigation did not reveal any other evidence of significant archaeological features or deposits.

8.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author of this report would like to thank Mr Simon Jennings and the groundwork contractors for their assistance in ensuring the successful completion of this project. Thanks are also due to Mr Richard Clark, Principal Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council, for providing relevant information and advice.

9.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Page, W (Ed.) 1935 'Parishes: Ryhall' in *A History of the County of Rutland*. Victoria County History

10.0 PROJECT/ ARCHIVE DETAILS

10.1 Project Details

SITE CODE: -

PLANNING APPLICATION No.: FUL/2010/0121

FIELD OFFICER: R. Trimble

NGR: TF 0361 1151

CIVIL PARISH: Ryhall, Rutland

HER No.:

DATE OF INTERVENTION: 24th -25th May 2010

TYPE OF INTERVENTION: Strip, Plan & Sample Excavation

UNDERTAKEN FOR: Mr Simon Jennings

10.2 Archive Details

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

FINAL LOCATION: Rutland County Museum, Catmose Street, Oakham, LE15 6HW

MUSEUM ACCESSION No.: OAKRM 2010.14

ACCESSION DATE: June 2011

The Site Archive Comprises:

Context Records	4
Plans at Scale 1:50	1
Section Drawings at Scale 1:20	2
Colour Print Photographs	6
Monochrome Print Photographs	6
Digital photographs	26
Set of Site Notes	1

It is intended that transfer of the archive in accordance with current published requirements will be undertaken following completion of this project.

COLOUR PLATES



Plate 1 – General view including [002] and [003]- looking east-southeast, 2 x 2m scales.

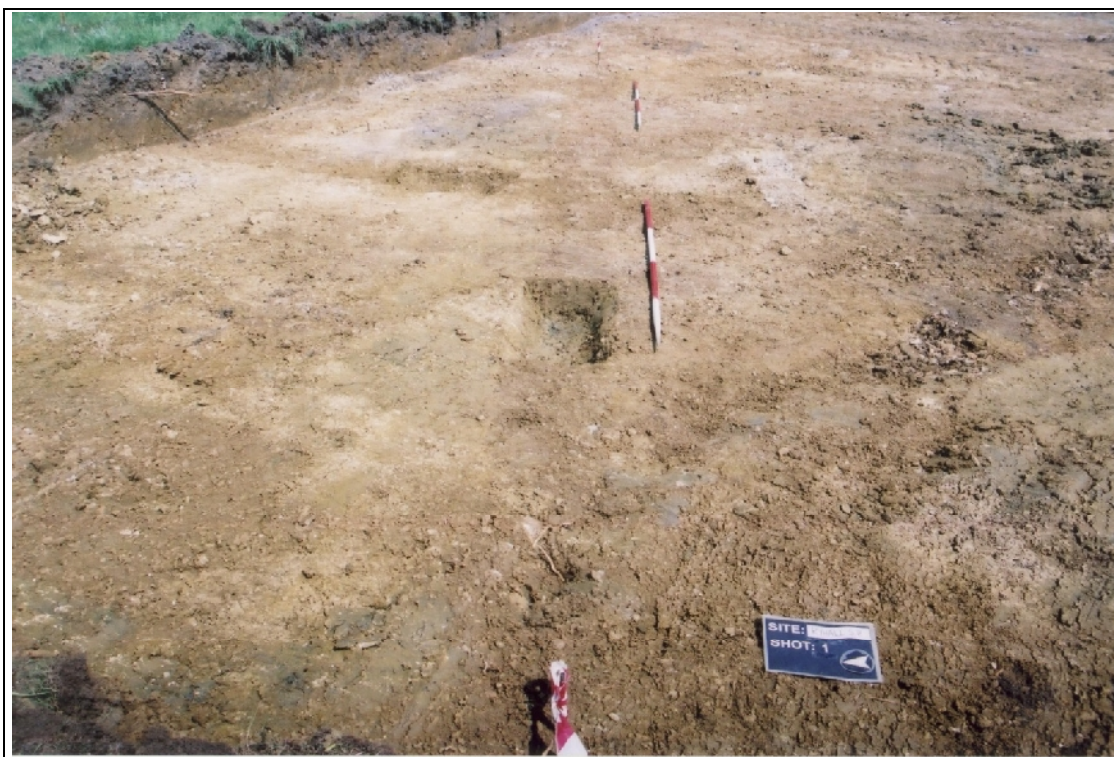
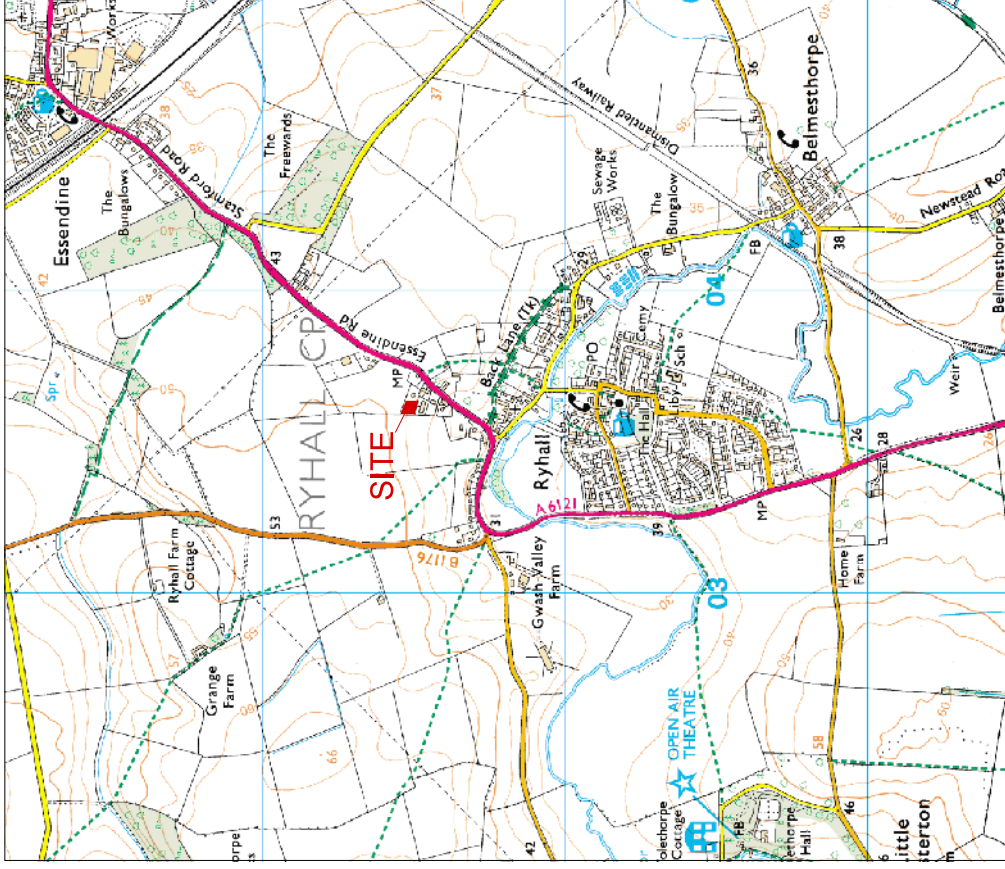
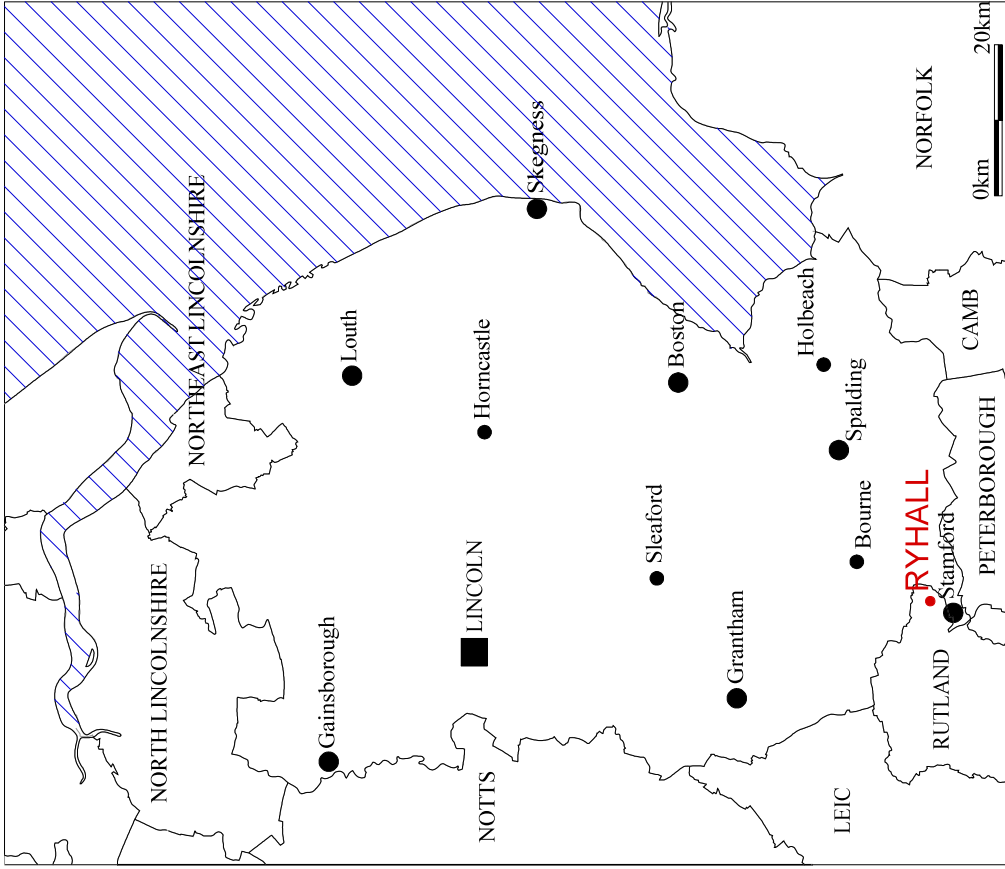
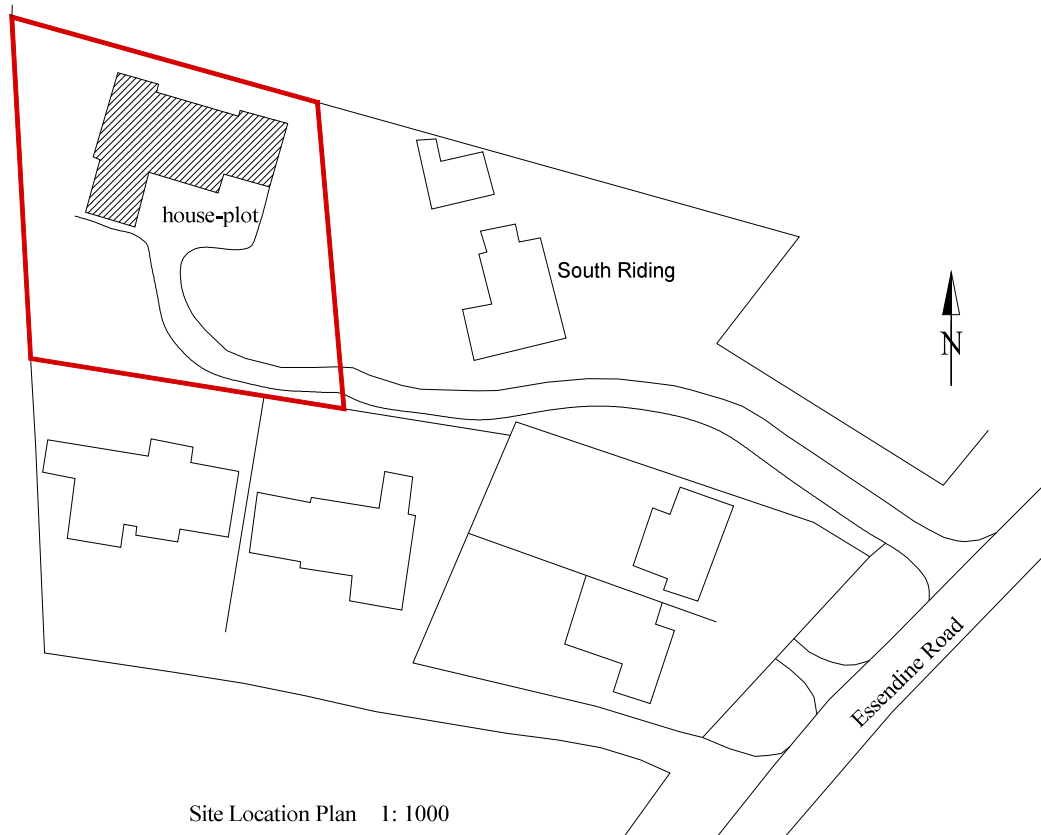


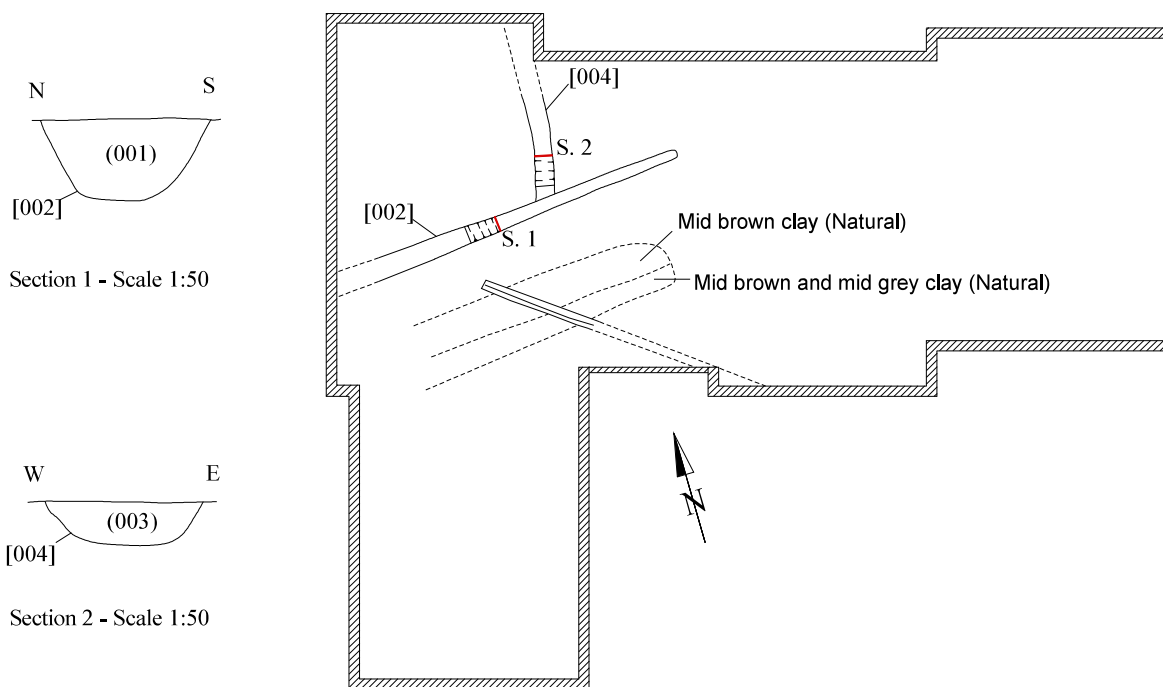
Plate 2 – View along [002], with [004] top left – looking east, 2 x 2m scales



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Site Location Plan 1: 1000



Recorded features shown in relation to the building footprint Scale 1:200

APPENDIX
OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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OASIS ID: withamar1-83192

Project details

Project name	Strip Map and Sample Excavation at South Riding, Ryhall, Rutland
Short description of the project	A programme of strip, map and sample excavation was undertaken during groundworks relating to the construction of a two-storey house and adjoining double garage at South Riding, Essendine Road, Ryhall, Rutland. Fieldwork was carried out on the 24th and 25th May 2010. The site lies in close proximity to rectilinear cropmarks believed to represent a prehistoric field system, while a Roman pottery scatter was found in the 1960's on land immediately west of the development. Groundworks associated with the development revealed an undated gully aligned east-west, which extended across the western part of the site. Together with a possible north-south return, the feature may have formed part of the prehistoric field system identified from aerial photographs. No artefacts were found on the site.
Project dates	Start: 24-05-2010 End: 25-05-2010
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	OAKRM 2010.14 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Monument type	GULLY Uncertain
Significant Finds	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	LEICESTERSHIRE RUTLAND RYHALL Land to the rear of South Riding, Essendine Road, Ryhall, Rutland
Postcode	PE9 4HE
Study area	0.19 Square metres
Site coordinates	TF 0361 1151 52.6910001866 -0.466850735666 52 41 27 N 000 28 00 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Witham Archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Russell Trimble
Project director/manager	Russell Trimble
Project supervisor	Russell Trimble
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Mr Simon Jennings

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Rutland County Museum
Digital Archive ID	OAKRM 2010.14
Digital Contents	'Survey'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Rutland County Museum
Paper Archive ID	OAKRM 2010.14
Paper Contents	'Stratigraphic','Survey'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Correspondence','Drawing','Notebook - Excavation','Research',' General Notes','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section','Survey '

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Land to the rear of South Riding, Essendine Road, Ryhall, Rutland. Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Excavation
Author(s)/Editor (s)	Trimble, R.
Other bibliographic details	20
Date	2010
Issuer or publisher	Witham Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Sleaford

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