NEVILLE HALL MIFA FREELANCE ARCHAEOLOGIST & CONSULTANT

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING ON LAND ADJACENT TO 35, MILL DROVE SOUTH, COWBIT, LINCOLNSHIRE.

National Grid Reference: TF 26610 18292

Site Code: MDCO15

Accession No: LCNCC: 2015.189

Planning Reference: H01-0932-13 (resubmission of H01-0467-

13)

PREPARED FOR MR. JOHN COOPER OF COOPER ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN ON BEHALF OF HIS CLIENT - MR. LEE SMITH

Ву

Neville Hall MIFA

May 2016

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Summary

The archaeological monitoring of the groundworks pertaining to the construction of a new residential development on land adjacent to 35, Mill Drove South, Cowbit, Lincolnshire was carried out by Neville Hall MIFA at the development site on the 2nd of February 2016.

The archaeological monitoring did not identify any archaeological activity on this site and there were no finds. The findings comprised a simple deposit sequence which consisted of a topsoil horizon, an undated and buried ploughsoil horizon and an underlying natural horizon, which was recorded within two representative sections. All of the deposits in this sequence were distinguished by their clean and homogeneous nature. The natural horizon is interpreted as an alluvial flood deposit.

A large modern disturbance comprising a large pit was recorded within the south-eastern corner of the new build area.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Neville Hall MIFA was commissioned by Mr. John Cooper of Cooper Architectural Design on behalf of his client Mr. Lee Smith to undertake the archaeological monitoring of the groundworks pertaining to the construction of a new residential development on land adjacent to 35, Mill Drove South, Cowbit, Lincolnshire, centred at National Grid Reference TF 26610 18292. The archaeological monitoring was carried out at the development site on the 2nd of February 2016.
- 1.2 The work was carried out according to the requirements of various archaeological conditions, which were attached to the granting of planning consent for this development by South Holland District Council, the Local Planning Authority, and acting on the advice of Ms Louise Jennings of the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Team, in her capacity as archaeological advisor on planning issues to the District Council. This is in accordance with the principles established in NPPF: Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide (Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2010), Standard and guidance for archaeological watching briefs (IFA, 2008).
- 1.3 Copies of the final report will be deposited with the clients, Ms Louise Jennings, the Planning Department of South Holland District Council, the Lincolnshire Heritage Environment Record (HER) and The Collection, Lincoln, along with an ordered project archive for long term storage and curation.

2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The development site is situated on the eastern frontage of Mill Drove South and on the northern outskirts of the village of Cowbit at National Grid Reference TF 26610 18292 and at a height of approximately 2mAOD. The village of Cowbit is located approximately 5km to the south of Spalding and some 10km to the north east of the town of Market Deeping. The village of Cowbit is situated within the modern civil parish of the same name, and in the administrative district of South Holland, county of Lincolnshire [Figures 1 and 2].
- 2.2 The development site is located in a flat and low-lying area within the Lincolnshire Fens. The development site is situated on deep calcareous clayey and silty soils of the Wallasea 2 Series, which have developed on marine alluvial deposits known as Terrington Beds. These deposits in turn overlie the solid geology, which comprises Oxford Clays and Kellaway Beds of the Upper Jurassic [BGS, 1992; Soil Survey, 1983].

3. Planning Background

3.1 A planning application for the proposed erection of a new residential development on land adjacent to 35, Mill Drove South, Cowbit, Lincolnshire (Planning Reference: H01-0932-13 (resubmission of H01-0467-13)) has been submitted to and granted consent by South Holland District Council, the Local Planning Authority [Figure 3]. However, as the proposed development was situated within a perceived archaeologically sensitive area, various archaeological conditions (Nos. 4-6) were attached to this consent. Following the receipt of an Archaeological Brief for this planning consent by Ms Louise Jennings of the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Team, it was established that the requirement for the fulfilment of these conditions would be the archaeological monitoring of all groundworks during the construction stage of development at the site.

3.2 A specification or a written scheme of works for the archaeological monitoring was subsequently submitted to and approved by Ms Louise Jennings of the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Team (on behalf of the LPA) prior to the commencement of the on-site works as required by Condition No. 4 of this planning consent.

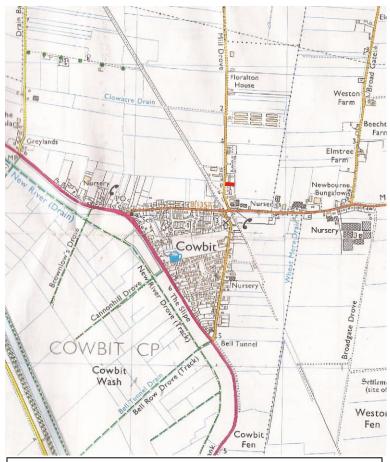


Figure 1: Site location at scale 1:25,000. The site is shown in red. (O.S. copyright licence number 100048723)

- 3.3 Following the approval of this specification by Ms Louise Jennings of the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Team (on behalf of the LPA), a notification period of fourteen days of the start of the groundworks programme was given to same as required by Condition 5 of this planning consent.
- 3.4 This report documents the results of this programme of site archaeological monitoring and recording and will be submitted in due course to Ms Louise Jennings of the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Team and to the Local Planning Authority as required by Condition 6 of this planning consent.

4. Aims and Objectives of the Archaeological Monitoring

4.1 The aims of the project were the continual archaeological monitoring of all site groundworks during the construction stage of development, which comprised the mechanical excavation of the foundations for the new residential development.

4.2 The objectives of the project were:

To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the area of the development site.

To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.

To allow the preservation by record of archaeological deposits.

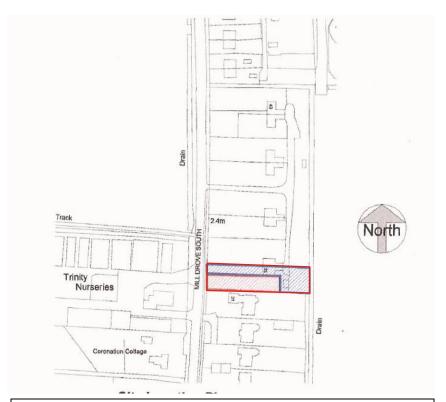


Figure 2: Site location at an original scale of 1:1,000, (not to scale), (extract from Architects plan). The site is shown outlined in red.

4.3 The development site is situated within an archaeologically sensitive area and within an area of high archaeological potential. There is much evidence for Iron Age and Roman settlement activity in the vicinity of this development site. It is considered likely that archaeological features, deposits, structures and finds associated with this multi-period period settlement activity may be encountered on this site. The specific objectives of this archaeological monitoring were to record any archaeological features, deposits, structures or finds associated with this multi-period settlement activity

5. Archaeological and Historical Background

Background research sources were consulted at the Lincolnshire Archives, the Lincoln Local Studies Library and the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Record (HER). A search of the Lincolnshire HER was conducted within a 0.5km radius that was centred on the development site.

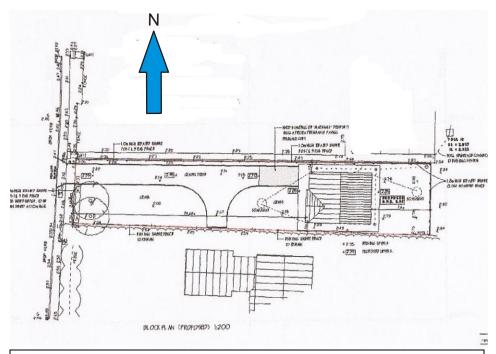


Figure 3: Block Plan Showing the Layout of the Proposed Development at an original scale of 1:200, (not to scale), (extract from Architects plan).

- Throughout early prehistory, the area around Cowbit probably consisted of coastal reed swamps and a salt marsh environment through which flowed creeks and the prehistoric River Welland, and was probably uninhabited. There is thus little evidence for earlier prehistoric activity in the Cowbit area, as that former contemporary land surface is now buried beneath substantial and deep later alluvial deposits [Hayes & Lane, 1992].
- 5.3 By the Iron Age, the local environment with ready access to both fresh and salt water with readily available local peat resources for fuel was conducive to the manufacture of salt. Salterns thus flourished on the wide levees of the contemporary River Welland and on other major creeks or roddons [ibid].
- Iron Age settlement activity in this area is suggested by scatters of contemporary pottery and briquetage and dark or black soilmarks or areas of burning and are sometimes located in close proximity to roddons. This might suggest saltern sites, with which such settlement activity was usually associated. There are a number of known Iron Age settlement sites including salterns or salt making sites within the search area. One of these sites occurs to the south-east of the development site and was visible on the ground as a scatter of pottery and animal bone on the eastern flank of a roddon (HER 23134).
- A probable Iron saltern site occurs to the to the north of the village (HER 23105). The site was marked by a dark stained soil, however no pottery was found this location. Five sherds of Iron Age pottery from a field scatter were found to the south of the development site (HER 20320).
- During the Roman period, salt production tended to drift eastwards due to encroachment of peat from the south west. Roman salterns were established on the wide levees on former courses of the River Welland utilising the same resources as noted earlier. Roman settlement also tended to congregate around these saltern sites. These sites are similarly denoted by close proximity to roddons, and to areas of dark soilmarks, pottery and

- briquetage scatters and of saltern hearths typified by areas of intense burning activity and red soil stains and areas of darker soil [Hayes & Lane, 1992].
- 5.7 A Roman saltern site is situated to the north-east of Cowbit (HER 23100). The site was denoted on the ground by a sparse spread of briquetage on the eastern flank of a roddon along with lines of fired red clay as the result of then recent ploughing activity. The soil was also stained red at this location.
- A Roman settlement site occurs to the north of Cowbit (HER 23101). This site was visible on the ground as a scatter of domestic debris including pottery, querns, fragments of roof tile, animal bone, an iron nail and fragments of fired clay.
- 5.9 A further Roman settlement site occurs to the north-west of the development site (HER 23103). This site is denoted on the ground by an area of dark soil staining with finds of pottery, animal bone and an iron nail. The site occupies a slightly elevated area on clay.
- 5.10 In the Roman period, the Welland maintained a similar course to that in the Iron Age, but during the late Saxon period, the River Welland was probably realigned and canalised by the monks of Crowland Abbey to pass through the gravel island on which sits the settlement of Crowland. This connected the Welland with the River Nene by means of a channel to the south east, and thus created a network of fenland waterways [Hayes & Lane, 1992].
- 5.11 There is very little evidence for or trace of Anglo-Saxon/early medieval settlement in the area around Cowbit. This is testified by the fact that only one sherd of early Saxon pottery has been found to the north of Cowbit (HER 23102).
- 5.12 The settlement of Cowbit itself was founded in the late 13th century as an outlying hamlet of Spalding along Stone Gate and the New Fen Dyke (HER 23106). Cowbit at that time was a remote part of the parish of Spalding. The earliest documentary reference to Cowbit or *Conbith*, *Conbiht* dates from AD1267. Later medieval documentary references variously detail: *Kinbuth* (c.AD1331), *Conbyth* (AD1332) and *Conbight* (AD1361). Cowbit is derived from *cor* from the Old English 'cow' and *byht* a bight or bend. Thus it would appear that the place name has a topographical derivation denoting a bend in the River Welland with nearby pasture for cows. Settlements like Cowbit remained small and clustered around higher embanked ground. The lands to the north of the New Fen Dyke were largely arable in the medieval period. This has been evidenced by widespread finds of contemporary pottery as the result of associated manuring activity [Morris, 11986; Cameron, 1998; Mills, 1991; Ekwall, 1991].
- 5.13 The reclamation of the local low-lying fenland probably began in the late 12th century with the construction of the New Fen Dyke around AD1186-9. By AD1205, a second fen dyke the Goldyke had been constructed to the south. A further early fen dyke was Stone Gate. The Wheat Mere Drain was also constructed as part of this process, and was first documented in the mid 13th century, when it was referred to as *Wykemere Drain*. These features protected the surrounding low lying and reclaimed lands from periodic winter flooding [Hayes & Lane, 1992].
- 5.14 An embankment was also constructed at this time the Marsh Bank to the east of the Welland. This was a forerunner of the present Barrier Bank and afforded Cowbit some protection against the waters of the Deeping Fen. The Welland at this time was a sluggish tidal creek prone to silting up and hence periodic flooding. Spalding Priory established a grange in this vicinity soon after AD1294 Goll Grange or *Grange of Golewilw* (HER 22093). Its location is probably to the east of the Wheat Mere Drain and is marked by two large mounds, which probably represent the main buildings of the grange.

- Finds of medieval pottery, building material, stone, brick and tile have been found at this location [ibid].
- 5.15 The remains of medieval dylings or of field systems survive in a small field close to the railway crossing at Stone Gate (HER 20323).
- 5.16 The River Welland was repositioned in the mid 17th century. This formed the Cowbit Wash, an area of washland in the western part of the parish. This was created to contain the overflow of the River Welland during periods of flooding. Cowbit Wash is up to 1km wide and lies between the eastern and former medieval course of the Welland and its present course. The Cowbit Wash remained unploughed until the 1950s, but is now under arable cultivation. Initially these lands provided both summer grazing and a hay crop but in winter was still liable to flooding. During the past 30 years this area of the Lincolnshire fens has been the subject of intensive arable farming, which has in turn desiccated the peat and has led to a general lowering of ground levels [Hayes & Lane, 1992].
- 5.17 On Backgate is a Grade II listed tower windmill (HER 20328), erected in 1798. It was working until the mid 1930s until final closure in 1969.
- 5.18 Cowbit Railway Station (HER 23554) was built in 1867 by the Great Northern Railway to a standard design. The station was closed to passengers in 1961 and to goods traffic in 1964. The railway line itself was closed in 1982 and the rails removed. The site consists of platforms, station house and offices and a signal box along with a level crossing and a crossing keeper's cottage. The signal box was constructed in about 1880. This building was the subject of a building survey in 2006 (HER ELI7491, Site code: CSB05).
- 5.19 The cropmarks of two parallel undated curvilinear ditches, su/bdivided by straight ditches with a double ditched feature at its southern end are located to the north of Cowbit (HER 20316).
- 5.20 A number of previous archaeological investigations have taken place within the search area. To the south of the development site, an archaeological fieldwalking survey on land off Backgate in 2001 had identified a scatter of Roman pottery dating from the mid 2nd-4th centuries AD. This was thought to indicate the site of a contemporary settlement (HER 23686, ELI1935-7, Site code: BGC01). Other finds from this survey comprised a scatter of post-medieval-modern pottery (HER 23687, ELI1935-7, Site code: BGC01). Nearby, a geophysical survey and an evaluation took place in 2001-2 on land at Curlew Drive (HER 23686-7, Site Code: CCB02) in advance of a residential development. This identified geophysical anomalies that turned out to be post-medieval drainage ditches. The evaluation identified several ditches and pits across the site with finds of Roman pottery, animal bone, a loomweight and possible wall plaster. Some of the pottery and the wall plaster suggested the location of a nearby settlement of high status. Quantities of post-medieval pottery and brick wasters suggesting the site of a possible nearby brick clamp were also located.
- 5.21 The largest fieldwork project in the vicinity of the development site was a geophysical survey which took place in 2002 along the line of the proposed A1073 road improvement scheme to the north-east, south-east and east of the development site. In two fields in this area, the results were inconclusive, revealing several aligned anomalies, which were possibly archaeological in origin. This was followed by trial trenching at various points along the line of this proposal in 2004 (Site code: LNEYSD 03). To the east of Cowbit, this included finds of a number of undated ditches (HER 23900, 23904, 23907); a post-medieval dyke, two post-medieval ditches and a post-medieval pond (HER 23901, 23905-6); two Saxo-Norman ditches and a pit (HER 23902 and a medieval ditch (HER 23903).

- 5.22 An archaeological excavation along the route of the then proposed A1073 relief road to the south-east of the development site in 2011 identified a stock enclosure of medieval date. The enclosure ditch yielded pottery from the 12th to the 14th centuries. A 14th-15th century ditch was also found to the north of this enclosure (HER 25741, ELI11136, ELI11138, Site code: SPEY08). A second excavation also along the line of this proposed route and to the south-east of Cowbit identified a large assemblage of brick fragments of 15th-16th century date, suggesting that a centre of brick production was located nearby (HER 25742, ELI11136, ELI11138, Site code: SPEY08). A further archaeological excavation also along the line of this proposed route to the north-east of the development site in 2011 identified a Roman settlement site (HER 23134). This comprised two sides of a probable early Roman domestic building, which lay within a rectangular ditched enclosure from which Roman pottery was recovered. To the south of this building and adjacent to a palaeochannel, a concentration of 2nd - 3rd century AD archaeological features were also found consisting of a series of ditches and pits. These features produced pottery from the 1st to the early 3rd centuries AD. The site was interpreted as a small farmstead beside the palaeochannel. There were also several timber built structures along with a kiln or oven used for salt making. A watching brief following the excavation located quantities of briquetage.
- 5.23 An archaeological evaluation took place to the north and north east of the village and to the west of Paradise Cottage along the line of the then proposed A1073 relief road in 2003. This identified six undated ditches, an undated ditch terminal (HER 23897, 23899) and a modern ditch (HER 23898), (Site code: LNEYSD03).
- 5.24 An archaeological watching brief took place during groundworks for a new detached residential dwelling at Stonegate in 2004 (HER ELI6523, Site code: CSG04). This revealed only natural and topsoil deposits with no archaeological activity or finds detected.
- An archaeological evaluation was conducted prior to proposed development on Backgate in 2011 (HER ELI11956, Site code: COBG11). This evaluation identified archaeological remains of Iron Age to Roman, medieval and post-medieval date. The Roman deposits related to domestic or agricultural use associated with nearby settlement. Pottery, animal bone, a triangular loomweight were among the artefacts of Iron Age to Roman date recovered, along with possible Roman wall plaster. Roman pottery from features close to the Backgate frontage was characteristic of high status dining. The wall plaster may relate to a nearby building of high status. At the south-western corner of the site the Roman deposits were likely to be associated with a small Roman settlement in the adjacent field to the south, first identified during fieldwalking undertaken in 2001. Medieval and post medieval deposits included features which probably formed part of a wider system of land division comprising closely spaced west to east aligned ditches.
- 5.26 A map regression exercise was undertaken using published Ordnance Survey (O.S.) maps from the Lincolnshire Archives and the local studies collections of Lincoln Central Library. An extract from the First Edition Ordnance Survey (O.S.) six inch to one mile scale map of 1891 shows this development site as lying within a narrow and linear enclosure situated along the eastern frontage of Mill Drove South. This is repeated on the extract from the Second Edition Ordnance Survey (O.S.) six inch to one mile scale map of 1906 and on the extract from the 1:10,560 scale Ordnance Survey (O.S.) map of 1956. Residential development had begun within this enclosure to the immediate north of this development site by this time. The extract from the 1:10,000 scale Ordnance Survey (O.S.) map of 1979 shows the same layout to the area of the development site and that no further change to this had taken place by this time.

6. Methodology

- The archaeological monitoring was undertaken by Neville Hall MIFA at the development site on the 2nd of February 2016. This comprised the continual archaeological monitoring and recording of the mechanical excavation of the foundations for a new residential dwelling. The mechanical excavations were undertaken using a 5-ton 360° mechanical excavator fitted with 0.60m and 0.50m wide toothed buckets.
- Where necessary, surfaces were hand cleaned for examination and recording, and the deposits observed were recorded on standard *pro-forma* context recording sheets. A plan at a scale of 1:50 was compiled on site of the monitored groundworks. This is reproduced at this same scale in this report on **Figure 4**. This plan was also used to plot the location of the two sections of the recorded deposit sequence here [designated as **Representative Sections 1-2**]. These two sections were also compiled on site at a scale of 1:20 and are similarly reproduced at this same scale on **Figure 4**. A digital colour photographic record was also maintained, which is reproduced in **Plates 1-19**, **Appendix 1**. A list of contexts recorded is reproduced in **Appendix 2**.
- All work was carried out according to the approved Specification as required by the archaeological planning condition and to the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) standards and guidance for archaeological watching briefs.

7. Results [Figure 4; Appendix 1; Plates 1-19]

- 7.1 All of the groundworks pertaining to this development, which comprised the mechanical excavation of the foundations for a new residential dwelling were the subject of continual archaeological monitoring and recording.
- 7.2 Some limited ground reduction to an average depth of 0.15m below ground levels had already taken place prior to arrival [Plate 1]. This reduction was confined to within a topsoil horizon (001). A layer of compacted hardcore had been laid over the reduced area to facilitate an access to the site. The adjoining spoil heap was scanned for any finds of which there were none.
- 7.3 The foundations for the new residential dwelling had also been set out prior to arrival [Plate 2]. The foundation trenches were excavated to varying lengths, to widths of between 0.50m-0.70m and to depths of between 1.0m-1.20m below ground levels [Plates 3-6; 8-12 and 14-19]. These mechanical excavations extended through a modern topsoil horizon (001), an undated buried ploughsoil horizon (002) and an underlying natural horizon (003), which extended to the base of these excavations. The deposit (003) is interpreted as an alluvial flood deposit. All of the deposits in this sequence were distinguished by their clean and homogeneous nature and were recorded within two sections, designated as Representative Sections 1 and 2 [Plates 7 and 13].
- 7.4 A very large and modern pit was identified as a large disturbance to this deposit sequence within the south-eastern portion of this new build area. This pit appeared to be sealed by the topsoil horizon (001), but contained fragments of modern brick and whole modern bricks within its backfill. It extended to a depth of 1.10m below ground levels.
- 7.5 This archaeological monitoring did not identify any archaeological activity on this site and there were no finds.

8. Discussion and Conclusions

- 8.1 All of the groundworks pertaining to this development comprising the mechanical excavation of the foundations for the new residential dwelling were the subject of continual archaeological monitoring and recording.
- 8.2 The archaeological monitoring did not identify any archaeological activity on this site and there were no finds. The findings comprised a simple deposit sequence which consisted of a topsoil horizon, an undated and buried ploughsoil horizon and an underlying natural horizon, which was recorded within two representative sections. All of the deposits in this sequence were distinguished by their clean and homogeneous nature. The natural horizon is interpreted as an alluvial flood deposit.
- 8.3 A large modern disturbance comprising a large pit was recorded within the south-eastern corner of the new build area.

9. Effectiveness of Methodology and Confidence Rating

9.1 The methodology chosen clearly demonstrated the absence of archaeological activity and of finds on this site; while providing sufficient time to record the deposit sequence observed. A more detailed level of archaeological assessment and investigation clearly would not have been necessary. It is considered that the implemented methodology was sufficient to confirm the absence of archaeological activity and finds present and to record the deposit sequence present within the area of the development site with a high degree of confidence.

10. Acknowledgements

10.1 Thanks are gratefully extended to Mr. John Cooper of Cooper Architectural Design and his client - Mr. Lee Smith for commissioning this work. Thanks are also extended to Ms Louise Jennings of the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Team, and to the staff of the Lincolnshire Heritage Environment Record, the Lincoln Local Studies Library and the Lincolnshire Archives for their kind assistance.

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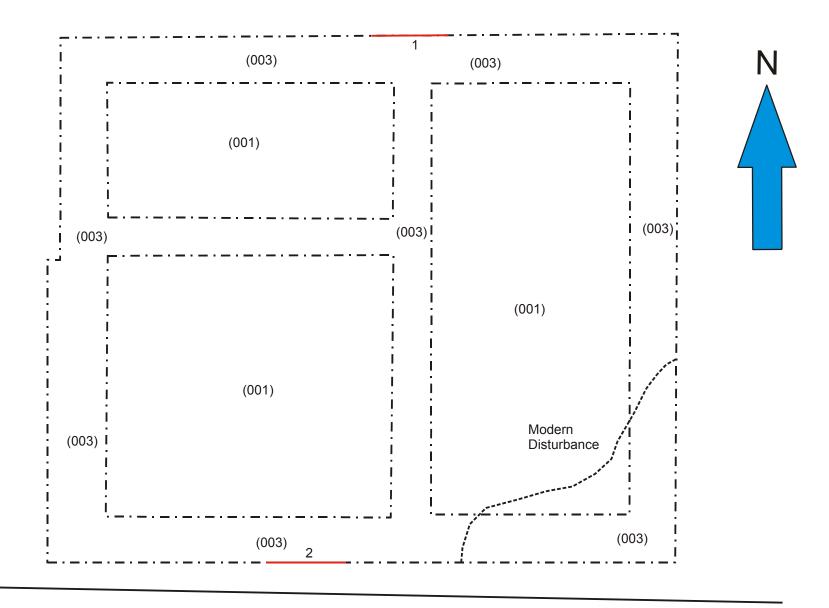
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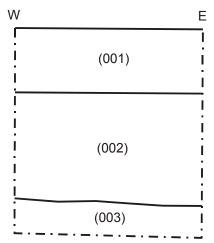
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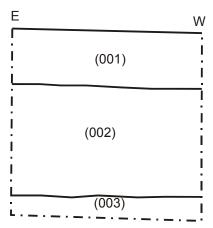
SITE BOUNDARY



SITE BOUNDARY



Representative Section 1, South Facing Section, scale 1:20



Representative Section 1, North Facing Section, scale 1:20

Figure 4: Plan of the Monitored Groundworks at a scale of 1:50 & Representative Sections 1-2 at a scale of 1:20

Appendix 1: Plates



Plate 1: Pre-groundworks, from the west



Plate 2: Pre-groundworks, from the west



Plate 3: Excavation of the foundations, from the west



Plate 4: Excavation of the foundations, from the east



Plate 5: Excavation of the foundations, from the east



Plate 6: Excavation of the foundations, from the east

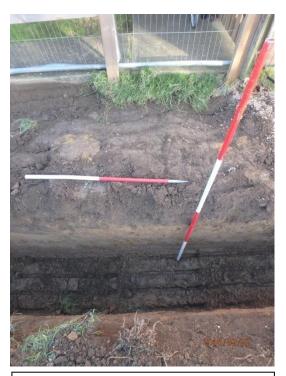


Plate 7: Representative Section 1, from the south



Plate 8: Excavation of the foundations, from the east



Plate 9: Excavation of the foundations, from the east



Plate 10: Excavation of the foundations, from the east



Plate 11: Excavation of the foundations, from the east



Plate 12: Excavation of the foundations, from the east



Plate 13: Representative Section 2, from the north



Plate 14: Excavation of the foundations, from the east



Plate 15: Excavation of the foundations, from the east



Plate 16: Excavation of the foundations, from the west



Plate 17: Excavation of the foundations, from the west



Plate 18: Excavation of the foundations, from the west



Plate 19: Excavation of the foundations, from the east

Appendix 2: List of Contexts

- Topsoil horizon. Soft, mid orange brown silt with occasional small angular and rounded stones. Very clean and homogeneous deposit. Above (002). Recorded within Representative Sections 1-2. Depth 0.33m.
- Buried and undated ploughsoil horizon. Soft, light orange brown silt with no inclusions. Very clean and homogeneous deposit. Below (001) and above (003). Recorded within Representative Sections 1-2. Depth 0.59m.
- Natural horizon. Soft, light orange brown silt with light blue grey gleying. Very clean and homogeneous deposit. Below (002). Recorded within Representative Sections 1-2. Depth >0.18m.

Appendix 3: The Archive

The archive consists of:

Three context records

One site plan at a scale of 1:50 of the monitored groundworks and two representative sections at a scale of 1:20 on one sheet of drawing film

One context register

One photographic register

All records are currently held at: 38 Finningley Road Lincoln LN6 0UP

And will be deposited in due course at:

The Collection Danes Terrace Lincoln LN2 1LP

Under the accession number LCNCC: 2015.189 and site code MDCO15

Appendix 4: Photographic Register

PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD SHEET

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Appendix 5: OASIS Summary Sheet

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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

Land Adjacent to 35, Mill Drove, Cowbit, Lincolnshire - Neville Hall MIFA

OASIS ID - nevilleh1-250503

	Versions						
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Upload images Upload boundary file Request record re-opened Printable version

Email Lincolnshire HER about this OASIS record

OASIS:

Please e-mail Historic England for OASIS help and advice
© ADS 1996-2015 Created by Jo Gilham and Jen Mitcham, email Last modified Wednesday 16 December 2015
Cite only: http://www.oasis.ac.uk/form/formctl.cfm?oid=nevilleh1-250503 for this page

Appendix 6: Specification for Archaeological Monitoring

Specification for Archaeological Monitoring on Land Adjacent to 35, Mill Drove South, Cowbit, Lincolnshire.

Prepared for Mr. John Cooper of Cooper Architectural Design on behalf of his client - Mr. Lee Smith

National Grid Reference: TF 26610 18292

Site Code: MDCO15

Accession No: LCNCC: 2015.189

Planning reference: H01-0932-13 (resubmission of H01-0467-

13)

Prepared by Neville Hall MIFA, Freelance Field Archaeologist & Consultant

October 2015

Non-technical summary

- S1 A scheme of works comprising archaeological monitoring is required during the groundworks pertaining to the construction of a new residential development at 35, Mill Drove South, Cowbit, Lincolnshire.
- The development site is situated within an archaeologically sensitive area and within an area of high archaeological potential. There is much evidence for Iron Age and Roman settlement activity in the vicinity of this development site. It is considered likely that archaeological features, deposits, structures and finds associated with this multi-period period settlement activity may be encountered on this site. The specific objectives of this archaeological monitoring will be to record any archaeological features, deposits, structures or finds associated with this multi-period settlement activity.
- The archaeological monitoring will be undertaken during the groundworks stage of development, which will comprise the mechanical excavation of the foundations and services for the new residential development. Any archaeological features, structures and/or deposits will be recorded in writing, graphically and photographically.
- On the completion of the monitoring, a report will be produced detailing the results of the archaeological investigation. The report will consist of a narrative supported by illustrations and photographs.

1. Site location and description [Figures 1 and 2]

- 1.1 The development site is situated on the eastern frontage of Mill Drove South and on the northern outskirts of the village of Cowbit at National Grid Reference TF 26610 18292 and at a height of approximately 2mAOD. The village of Cowbit is located approximately 5km to the south of Spalding and some 10km to the north east of the town of Market Deeping. The village of Cowbit is situated within the modern civil parish of the same name, and in the administrative district of South Holland, county of Lincolnshire.
- 1.2 The development site is located in a flat and low-lying area within the Lincolnshire Fens. The development site is situated on deep calcareous clayey and silty soils of the Wallasea 2 Series, which have developed on marine alluvial deposits known as Terrington Beds. These deposits in turn overlie the solid geology, which comprises Oxford Clays and Kellaway Beds of the Upper Jurassic.

2. Planning background [Figure 3]

2.1 This document comprises a Specification or a written scheme of works for archaeological monitoring and recording which is to be maintained during the groundworks pertaining to the construction of a new residential development at 35, Mill Drove South, Cowbit, Lincolnshire (Planning reference: H01-0932-13).

3. Historical and Archaeological Background

- 3.1 Background research sources were consulted at the Lincolnshire Archives, the Lincoln Local Studies Library and the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Record (HER). A search of the Lincolnshire HER was conducted within a 0.5km radius that was centred on the development site.
- 3.2 Throughout early prehistory, the area around Cowbit probably consisted of coastal reed swamps and a salt marsh environment through which flowed creeks and the prehistoric River Welland, and was probably uninhabited. There is thus little evidence for earlier prehistoric activity in the Cowbit area, as that former contemporary land surface is now buried beneath substantial and deep later alluvial deposits.

3.3 By the Iron Age, the local environment with ready access to both fresh and salt water with readily available local peat resources for fuel was conducive to the manufacture of salt. Salterns thus flourished on the wide levees of the contemporary River Welland and on other major creeks or roddons.

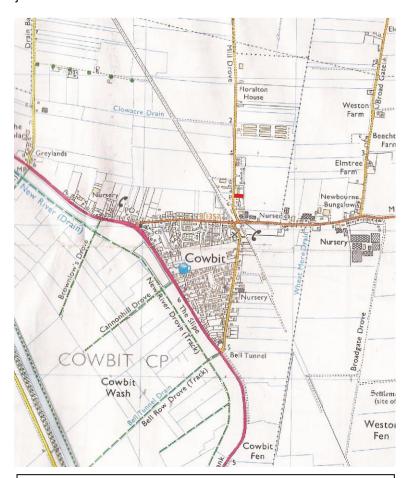


Figure 1: Site location at scale 1:12,500. The site is shown in red. (O.S. copyright licence number 100048723)

- 3.4 Iron Age settlement activity in this area is suggested by scatters of contemporary pottery and briquetage and dark or black soilmarks or areas of burning and are sometimes located in close proximity to roddons. This might suggest saltern sites, with which such settlement activity was usually associated. There are a number of known Iron Age settlement sites including salterns or salt making sites within the search area. One of these sites occurs to the south-east of the development site and was visible on the ground as a scatter of pottery and animal bone on the eastern flank of a roddon (HER 23134).
- A probable Iron saltern site occurs to the to the north of the village (HER 23105). The site was marked by a dark stained soil, however no pottery was found this location. Five sherds of Iron Age pottery from a field scatter were found to the south of the development site (HER 20320).



Figure 2: Site location at an original scale of scale 1:1,000, (not to scale), (extract from Architects plan). The site is shown outlined in red.

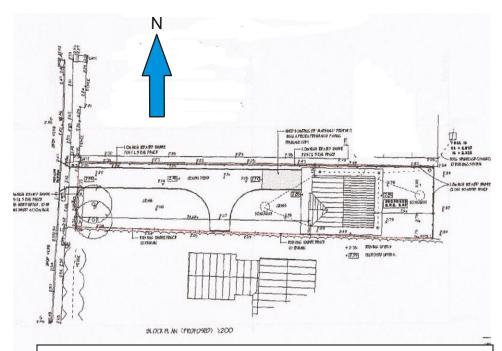


Figure 3: Block Plan Showing the Layout of the Proposed Development at an original scale of scale 1:200, (not to scale), (extract from Architects plan).

- During the Roman period, salt production tended to drift eastwards due to encroachment of peat from the south west. Roman salterns were established on the wide levees on former courses of the River Welland utilising the same resources as noted earlier. Roman settlement also tended to congregate around these saltern sites. These sites are similarly denoted by close proximity to roddons, and to areas of dark soilmarks, pottery and briquetage scatters and of saltern hearths typified by areas of intense burning activity and red soil stains and areas of darker soil.
- 3.7 A Roman saltern site is situated to the north-east of Cowbit (HER 23100). The site was denoted on the ground by a sparse spread of briquetage on the eastern flank of a roddon along with lines of fired red clay as the result of then recent ploughing activity. The soil was also stained red at this location.
- A Roman settlement site occurs to the north of Cowbit (HER 23101). This site was visible on the ground as a scatter of domestic debris including pottery, querns, fragments of roof tile, animal bone, an iron nail and fragments of fired clay.
- 3.9 A further Roman settlement site occurs to the north-west of the development site (HER 23103). This site is denoted on the ground by an area of dark soil staining with finds of pottery, animal bone and an iron nail. The site occupies a slightly elevated area on clay.
- 3.10 In the Roman period, the Welland maintained a similar course to that in the Iron Age, but during the late Saxon period, the River Welland was probably realigned and canalised by the monks of Crowland Abbey to pass through the gravel island on which sits the settlement of Crowland. This connected the Welland with the River Nene by means of a channel to the south east, and thus created a network of fenland waterways.
- 3.11 There is very little evidence for or trace of Anglo-Saxon/early medieval settlement in the area around Cowbit. This is testified by the fact that only one sherd of early Saxon pottery has been found to the north of Cowbit (HER 23102).
- 3.12 The settlement of Cowbit itself was founded in the late 13th century as an outlying hamlet of Spalding along Stone Gate and the New Fen Dyke (HER 23106). Cowbit at that time was a remote part of the parish of Spalding. The earliest documentary reference to Cowbit or *Conbith*, *Conbiht* dates from AD1267. Later medieval documentary references variously detail: *Kinbuth* (*c*.AD1331), *Conbyth* (AD1332) and *Conbight* (AD1361). Cowbit is derived from *cor* from the Old English 'cow' and *byht* a bight or bend. Thus it would appear that the place name has a topographical derivation denoting a bend in the River Welland with nearby pasture for cows. Settlements like Cowbit remained small and clustered around higher embanked ground. The lands to the north of the New Fen Dyke were largely arable in the medieval period. This has been evidenced by widespread finds of contemporary pottery as the result of associated manuring activity.
- 3.13 The reclamation of the local low-lying fenland probably began in the late 12th century with the construction of the New Fen Dyke around AD1186-9. By AD1205, a second fen dyke the Goldyke had been constructed to the south. A further early fen dyke was Stone Gate. The Wheat Mere Drain was also constructed as part of this process, and was first documented in the mid 13th century, when it was referred to as *Wykemere Drain*. These features protected the surrounding low lying and reclaimed lands from periodic winter flooding.
- 3.14 An embankment was also constructed at this time the Marsh Bank to the east of the Welland. This was a forerunner of the present Barrier Bank and afforded Cowbit some protection against the waters of the Deeping Fen. The Welland at this time was a sluggish tidal creek prone to silting up and hence periodic flooding. Spalding Priory established a grange in this vicinity soon after AD1294 Goll Grange or *Grange of*

Golewilw (HER 22093). Its location is probably to the east of the Wheat Mere Drain and is marked by two large mounds, which probably represent the main buildings of the grange. Finds of medieval pottery, building material, stone, brick and tile have been found at this location.

- 3.15 The remains of medieval dylings or of field systems survive in a small field close to the railway crossing at Stone Gate (HER 20323).
- 3.16 The River Welland was repositioned in the mid 17th century. This formed the Cowbit Wash, an area of washland in the western part of the parish. This was created to contain the overflow of the River Welland during periods of flooding. Cowbit Wash is up to 1km wide and lies between the eastern and former medieval course of the Welland and its present course. The Cowbit Wash remained unploughed until the 1950s, but is now under arable cultivation. Initially these lands provided both summer grazing and a hay crop but in winter was still liable to flooding. During the past 30 years this area of the Lincolnshire fens has been the subject of intensive arable farming, which has in turn desiccated the peat and has led to a general lowering of ground levels.
- 3.17 On Backgate is a Grade II listed tower windmill (HER 20328), erected in 1798. It was working until the mid 1930s until final closure in 1969.
- 3.18 Cowbit Railway Station (HER 23554) was built in 1867 by the Great Northern Railway to a standard design. The station was closed to passengers in 1961 and to goods traffic in 1964. The railway line itself was closed in 1982 and the rails removed. The site consists of platforms, station house and offices and a signal box along with a level crossing and a crossing keeper's cottage. The signal box was constructed in about 1880. This building was the subject of a building survey in 2006 (HER ELI7491, Site code: CSB05).
- 3.19 The cropmarks of two parallel undated curvilinear ditches, subdivided by straight ditches with a double ditched feature at its southern end are located to the north of Cowbit (HER 20316).
- 3.20 A number of previous archaeological investigations have taken place within the search area. To the south of the development site, an archaeological fieldwalking survey on land off Backgate in 2001 had identified a scatter of Roman pottery dating from the mid 2nd-4th centuries AD. This was thought to indicate the site of a contemporary settlement (HER 23686, ELI1935-7, Site code: BGC01). Other finds from this survey comprised a scatter of post-medieval-modern pottery (HER 23687, ELI1935-7, Site code: BGC01). Nearby, a geophysical survey and an evaluation took place in 2001-2 on land at Curlew Drive (HER 23686-7, Site Code: CCB02) in advance of a residential development. This identified geophysical anomalies that turned out to be post-medieval drainage ditches. The evaluation identified several ditches and pits across the site with finds of Roman pottery, animal bone, a loomweight and possible wall plaster. Some of the pottery and the wall plaster suggested the location of a nearby settlement of high status. Quantities of post-medieval pottery and brick wasters suggesting the site of a possible nearby brick clamp were also located.
- 3.21 The largest fieldwork project in the vicinity of the development site was a geophysical survey which took place in 2002 along the line of the proposed A1073 road improvement scheme to the north-east, south-east and east of the development site. In two fields in this area, the results were inconclusive, revealing several aligned anomalies, which were possibly archaeological in origin. This was followed by trial trenching at various points along the line of this proposal in 2004 (Site code: LNEYSD 03). To the east of Cowbit, this included finds of a number of undated ditches (HER 23900, 23904, 23907); a post-medieval dyke, two post-medieval ditches and a post-medieval pond (HER 23901,

- 23905-6); two Saxo-Norman ditches and a pit (HER 23902 and a medieval ditch (HER 23903).
- 3.22 An archaeological excavation along the route of the then proposed A1073 relief road to the south-east of the development site in 2011 identified a stock enclosure of medieval date. The enclosure ditch yielded pottery from the 12th to the 14th centuries. A 14th-15th century ditch was also found to the north of this enclosure (HER 25741, ELI11136, ELI11138, Site code: SPEY08). A second excavation also along the line of this proposed route and to the south-east of Cowbit identified a large assemblage of brick fragments of 15th-16th century date, suggesting that a centre of brick production was located nearby (HER 25742, ELI11136, ELI11138, Site code: SPEY08). A further archaeological excavation also along the line of this proposed route to the north-east of the development site in 2011 identified a Roman settlement site (HER 23134). This comprised two sides of a probable early Roman domestic building, which lay within a rectangular ditched enclosure from which Roman pottery was recovered. To the south of this building and adjacent to a palaeochannel, a concentration of 2nd - 3rd century AD archaeological features were also found consisting of a series of ditches and pits. These features produced pottery from the 1st to the early 3rd centuries AD. The site was interpreted as a small farmstead beside the palaeochannel. There were also several timber built structures along with a kiln or oven used for salt making. A watching brief following the excavation located quantities of briquetage.
- An archaeological evaluation took place to the north and north east of the village and to the west of Paradise Cottage along the line of the then proposed A1073 relief road in 2003. This identified six undated ditches, an undated ditch terminal (HER 23897, 23899) and a modern ditch (HER 23898), (Site code: LNEYSD03).
- 3.24 An archaeological watching brief took place during groundworks for a new detached residential dwelling at Stonegate in 2004 (HER ELI6523, Site code: CSG04). This revealed only natural and topsoil deposits with no archaeological activity or finds detected.
- An archaeological evaluation was conducted prior to proposed development on Backgate in 2011 (HER ELI11956, Site code: COBG11). This evaluation identified archaeological remains of Iron Age to Roman, medieval and post-medieval date. The Roman deposits related to domestic or agricultural use associated with nearby settlement. Pottery, animal bone, a triangular loomweight were among the artefacts of Iron Age to Roman date recovered, along with possible Roman wall plaster. Roman pottery from features close to the Backgate frontage was characteristic of high status dining. The wall plaster may relate to a nearby building of high status. At the south-western corner of the site the Roman deposits were likely to be associated with a small Roman settlement in the adjacent field to the south, first identified during fieldwalking undertaken in 2001. Medieval and post medieval deposits included features which probably formed part of a wider system of land division comprising closely spaced west to east aligned ditches.
- 3.26 A map regression exercise was undertaken using published Ordnance Survey (O.S.) maps from the Lincolnshire Archives and the local studies collections of Lincoln Central Library. An extract from the First Edition Ordnance Survey (O.S.) six inch to one mile scale map of 1891 shows this development site as lying within a narrow and linear enclosure situated along the eastern frontage of Mill Drove South. This is repeated on the extract from the Second Edition Ordnance Survey (O.S.) six inch to one mile scale map of 1906 and on the extract from the 1:10,560 scale Ordnance Survey (O.S.) map of 1956. Residential development had begun within this enclosure to the immediate north of this development site by this time. The extract from the 1:10,000 scale Ordnance Survey (O.S.) map of 1979 shows the same layout to the area of the development site and that no further change to this had taken place by this time.

4. Aims and objectives of the project

- 4.1 The aims of the project are the continual archaeological monitoring of all site groundworks during the construction stage of development, which will comprise the mechanical excavation of foundations and services for the new residential development.
- 4.2 The objectives of the project are:

To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the area of the development site.

To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.

To allow the preservation by record of archaeological deposits.

4.3 The development site is situated within an archaeologically sensitive area and within an area of high archaeological potential. There is much evidence for Iron Age and Roman settlement activity in the vicinity of this development site. It is considered likely that archaeological features, deposits, structures and finds associated with this multi-period period settlement activity may be encountered on this site. The specific objectives of this archaeological monitoring will be to record any archaeological features, deposits, structures or finds associated with this multi-period settlement activity.

5. Methodology

- The archaeological monitoring will be undertaken during the groundworks phase of development, and will include the **continual monitoring** of any topsoil stripping, of the excavations of foundations and service trenches, and of any other ground disturbances. The mechanical excavations will be undertaken using a toothless bucket.
- 5.2 All work will be carried out according to the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) standards, and will be under the management of a Member of the IFA (MIFA).
- 5.3 All work will be undertaken following all statutory Health and Safety requirements and legislation in operation at the time of the monitoring.
- 5.4 A Risk Assessment will be prepared for the site.
- 5.5 Stripped areas and trench sections will be continually observed to identify any archaeological features and/or deposits which may be exposed.
- 5.6 Section drawings at a scale of 1:10 will be made of any archaeological features identified in the course of the groundworks, including representative sections of trenches at appropriate intervals. These will be related to a site plan drawing at a scale of 1:50, which may also record archaeological features and/or deposits identified. Any significant archaeological features in plan will also be recorded at a scale of 1:20.
- 5.7 Written descriptions detailing the nature of archaeological features and/or deposits encountered will be compiled on pro-forma context record sheets.
- Any finds recovered will be bagged and labelled for further analysis. All relevant finds will be ordered into an archive. Most modern material will not be retained, although notes will be made of the appropriate context. An appropriate sample of materials such as ceramic building materials will be made.

- Any and all artefacts found during the monitoring and thought to come under the provisions of the *Treasure Act* (1996), will be removed from the site to a secure location, and will be promptly reported to the appropriate coroner's office.
- 5.10 Throughout the monitoring a digital photographic record will be compiled, and will comprise an overview of the site prior to work starting, and during as well as after completion of the work, and will include any excavated features, sections and other relevant details that aid interpretation.
- 5.11 Should human remains be encountered, they will be left *in situ*, and only excavated if absolutely necessary. Proper respect will be accorded to these remains, which will be cleaned to allow positive identification. Should removal be required, the appropriate Ministry of Justice Licence will be obtained prior to the removal of the remains. In addition, any remains will be reported to the local Environmental Health Department, coroner and the police will be informed, where appropriate.
- 5.12 The fieldwork will be undertaken by Neville Hall MIFA. Additional personnel may be appointed if required.

6. Post-fieldwork methodology

- On the completion of the fieldwork, all of the written, drawn and photographic records produced by the archaeological monitoring will be checked, ordered, labelled (where appropriate) and catalogued to compile a distinctive site archive.
- 6.2 All finds recovered during the fieldwork will be washed, marked and packaged according to the deposit from which there were recovered. They will also be ordered into (and form part of) the site archive.
- 6.3 An assessment of significant finds will be made in light of general site information.
- 6.4 Any finds requiring specialist treatment and/or conservation will be sent to the Conservation Laboratory at The Collection, Lincoln, and in consultation with the relevant curator.
- 6.5 The site archive will be examined to enable the determination of various phases of activity on the site (if appropriate).
- 6.6 Relevant finds will be sent to specialists for identification and dating.

7. Monitoring arrangements

- 7.1 Provision will be made for the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Team on behalf of South Holland District Council, (the Local Planning Authority) to monitor the works during the fieldwork stage and any other aspect of the archaeological project as required including the post fieldwork analysis and report preparation stages of the project.
- 7.2 A minimum notification period of not less than fourteen days of the start date of works on the site will be given to the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Team.
- 7.3 All aspects of the archaeological programme will be undertaken in accordance with this project specification.
- 7.4 Any variation to the project programme in terms of works or recording on or off site will be fully discussed and agreed with the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Team.

- 7.5 Arrangements will be made for the representative of the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Team for access to the site to undertake monitoring visits, and such visits will be accounted for in the final report preparation.
- 7.6 The Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Team shall be kept fully informed of any unexpected or unforeseen discoveries made during the course of the archaeological monitoring and recording programme.

8. Archive preparation and deposition

- 8.1 The documentation and records generated by the archaeological monitoring will be sorted and ordered in the format acceptable to The Collection, Lincoln, and to the standards and requirements as laid out in their Guide Book.
- 8.2 A unique accession number will be obtained from The Collection for the site archive.
- 8.3 The archive will be deposited at The Collection, Lincoln by April 2016.

9. Reporting procedures

- 9.1 A report detailing the findings of the archaeological monitoring will be completed within two months after the finalisation of the fieldwork. Any delays will be related to the relevant authorities.
- 9.2 The report will consist of:

A title page, with project name and location, national grid reference, planning reference, site code, accession number, client name, author and date;

A contents page listing report sections, illustrations and appendices;

A non-technical summary of the results of the monitoring;

An introduction, site description and location;

Planning background to the project;

A section on the archaeological and historical background to the project;

A description of the methodology used in the project;

A section describing the results of the monitoring;

A section on the discussion and results of the project including a consideration of the findings of the project in a local and regional context;

A consideration of the effectiveness of the project methodology and a confidence rating of the results:

Illustrations including plans showing monitored areas, all archaeological features and sections thereof (including trench sections); and

Appendices comprising appropriate photographs of the site and of specific and significant archaeological features and representative sections, a list of contexts, any specialist reports on finds from the site, a list of the site archive, a photographic register and a copy of this document.

An electronic copy of the report will be deposited with the OASIS project (On-line Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations) http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/index.cfm.

10. Publication and dissemination

- 10.1 Copies of the final report will be deposited with the clients, the local curator (on behalf of the local planning authority), South Holland District Council and with the Lincolnshire Heritage Environment Record (including a digital copy in a .pdf format).
- 10.2 A note will be placed in 'Lincolnshire History and Archaeology' describing the results.
- 10.3 The deposition of the site archive will be in accordance with guidelines outlined in the Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook (LCC, 2015).
- 10.4 Should the results of the archaeological investigation merit it, a note will also be placed in appropriate national journals e.g. *Medieval Archaeology*.

11. Other factors (including contingency)

- 11.1 In the event of the discovery of any unexpected remains of archaeological importance, or of any changed circumstances, it is the responsibility of the archaeological contractor to inform the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Team.
- 11.2 Where important archaeological remains are discovered and deemed to merit further investigation, additional financial resources may be required to provide an appropriate level of investigation, recording and analysis.
- 11.3 Any additional financial contingency requirement for additional fieldwork or postexcavation analysis outside the scope of the proposed scheme of works will only be activated following full consultation with the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Team and the client.

12. Variations to the proposed scheme

12.1 Variations to the proposed scheme will only be made following written confirmation with the archaeological curator.

13. Resources

- 13.1 The monitoring will be undertaken by Neville Hall using standard archaeological field techniques.
- 13.2 Post-excavation analysis will be undertaken by Neville Hall and where available specialist analysis from:-

Jane Young Medieval and Post-medieval Ceramics

Ian Rowlandson Iron Age and Roman Ceramics

Val Fryer Environmental

Carol Allen Neolithic and Bronze Age

Malin Holst Osteoarchaeology

Jane Cowgill Metallurgy

13.3 Small finds requiring conservation will be conserved by the City and County Museum Laboratory.

13.4 Recognised specialists will be sought in the event that other data are retrieved in the course of the monitoring.

14. Insurance statement

14.1 Public indemnity of £2,000,000 and private indemnity insurance of £250,000 with Towergate Insurance.

15. Copyright

15.1 Copyright will remain that of the author. Licence will be given to the client to present any reports, copyright of the author, to the planning authority in good faith of satisfactory settlement of account.

16. Ownership

16.1 It will be asked of the client, at the outset, that the ownership of any portable objects discovered in the course of the monitoring be donated along with the archive.