
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
AT ROUND HOLT,
STYRRUP WITH OLDCOTES,
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
(SESN 12)**

**Work Undertaken For
Northern Powergrid
(Yorkshire) PLC**

November 2012

Report Compiled by
Paul Cope-Faulkner BA (Hons)

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APS Report No. 93/12

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES**



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1. SUMMARY

A watching brief was undertaken during groundworks at Round Holt, Styrrup with Oldcotes, Nottinghamshire. The watching brief monitored the excavation of a new cable trench and replacement of overhead poles.

To the north of the site is an area of extensive cropmarks of field boundaries of Late Iron Age (100 BC-AD 43) or Romano-British (AD 43-410) date. There is also an enclosure with internal divisions lying to the northeast. To the east of the site is an earthwork boundary bank which, though undated, may have Saxon (AD 410-1066) origins.

The watching brief revealed a sequence of natural, subsoil and topsoil deposits. No other archaeological features were identified during the work. Finds retrieved during the investigation comprise pottery, brick, tile, glass and metalwork of post-medieval date.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Definition of a Watching Brief

An archaeological watching brief is defined as “*a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits maybe disturbed or destroyed.*” (IfA 2008).

2.2 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Northern Powergrid (Yorkshire) PLC to undertake an archaeological watching brief during replacement of overhead cables and cable trenching works at Round Holt, Styrrup

with Oldcotes, Nottinghamshire. The watching brief was carried out on the 17th and 18th September 2012.

2.3 Topography and Geology

Styrrup is located 11km north of Worksop and 14km northwest of East Retford, in the administrative district of Bassetlaw, Nottinghamshire (Fig. 1).

The site is located 2.8km east of the centre of Styrrup at National Grid Reference SK 6351 8991 (Fig. 2). Situated to the north of Serlby Park, the site lies at a height of c. 13m OD on land that slopes down to the south, towards the floodplain of the River Ryton.

Local soils are of the Newport 1 Association, typically well drained, medium sandy soils (Hodge *et al.*, 1984, 270). These soils are developed on a drift geology of glaciofluvial sands and gravels which seals a solid geology of Triassic Nottingham Sandstone (GSGB 1967).

2.4 Archaeological Setting

Styrrup with Oldcotes lies in an area of known archaeological remains dating from the Iron Age to present. Situated immediately north of Round Holt, and extending northwards to Harworth is an area of extensive cropmarks. Most of the cropmarks are of linear field boundaries of possible Iron Age or Romano-British date which are connected by a series of trackways. To the northeast of Round Holt, cropmarks indicate a small enclosure with some internal divisions and further enclosures attached to the north (Riley 1980, 102-3).

To the east of the site is a north-south earthwork known as ‘Roman Bank’ running alongside the River Ryton. Although undated, it would appear to be a Saxon creation and comprises a high bank with an intermittent ditch on the eastern side.

Styrrup is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of c. 1086. Referred to as *Estirape*, the name is derived from the Old English *stīgrāp* meaning ‘stirrup’, in this sense applied to a topographical feature (Ekwall 1989, 452). At the time of the Domesday Survey the land was held by Roger de Bully and contained 6 acres of meadow and 10 acres of woodland pasture (Williams and Martin 2002, 767).

3. AIMS

The aim of the archaeological investigation was to ensure that any archaeological features exposed during the groundworks should be recorded and, if present, to determine their date, function and origin.

4. METHODS

The new cable trench was excavated by machine to a depth of 0.6m from a newly placed pole towards the cottage located within Round Holt. Following excavation, the sides of the trenches were then cleaned and rendered vertical. Selected deposits were excavated further to retrieve artefactual material and to determine their function. Each deposit was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and their descriptions appears as Appendix 1. A photographic record was compiled and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20. Recording was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services practice.

Following excavation finds were examined and a period date assigned where possible (Appendix 2). The records were also checked and a stratigraphic matrix produced. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them and supplemented by artefact dating.

5. RESULTS

Archaeological contexts are listed below and described. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

The earliest deposit encountered during the watching brief was a natural layer of yellowish brown silty sand (003). This measured in excess of 0.26m thick.

Overlying the natural towards the northern end of the cable trench was a subsoil layer comprising a 0.2m thick (Fig. 4, Section 1; Plate 2) deposit of yellowish brown silty sand (002). Recovered from this layer were fragments of post-medieval brick and tile.

This was overlain by a topsoil of grey sandy silt with gravel from the adjacent track (001). This was 0.17m thick.

To the south, subsoil was not evident and the natural was overlain directly by topsoil, comprising greyish brown sandy silt (004) that was 0.25m thick (Fig. 4, Sections 2 and 3; Plates 3 and 4). Pottery, glass and metalwork of 19th century date was collected from this deposit.

6. DISCUSSION

Natural deposits comprise silty sands which relates to the underlying drift geology of glaciofluvial sand and gravel.

Developed upon this was a subsoil layer which may indicate that the site had been under an agricultural regime. This was in turn sealed by topsoil deposits. No archaeological features were revealed during the works.

Finds from the investigation include 19th century pottery, glass and metalwork along with post-medieval brick and tile fragments.

7. CONCLUSION

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at Round Holt, Styrrup with Oldcotes, Nottinghamshire, as the site lay close to an extensive area of Iron Age or Roman field system cropmarks.

However, no archaeological features were revealed during the investigations and only a sequence of natural, subsoil and topsoil deposits encountered. Finds retrieved from the watching brief include pottery, brick, tile, glass and metalwork of post-medieval date.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Mr S Gray of Northern Powergrid (Yorkshire) PLC for commissioning the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor who edited this report along with Tom Lane. Dave Start kindly allowed access to the library maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Gary Taylor
 Site Supervisor: Fiona Walker
 Finds processing: Denise Buckley
 Photographic reproduction: Sue Unsworth
 Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner
 Post-excavation analysis: Paul Cope-Faulkner

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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IfA, 2008, *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

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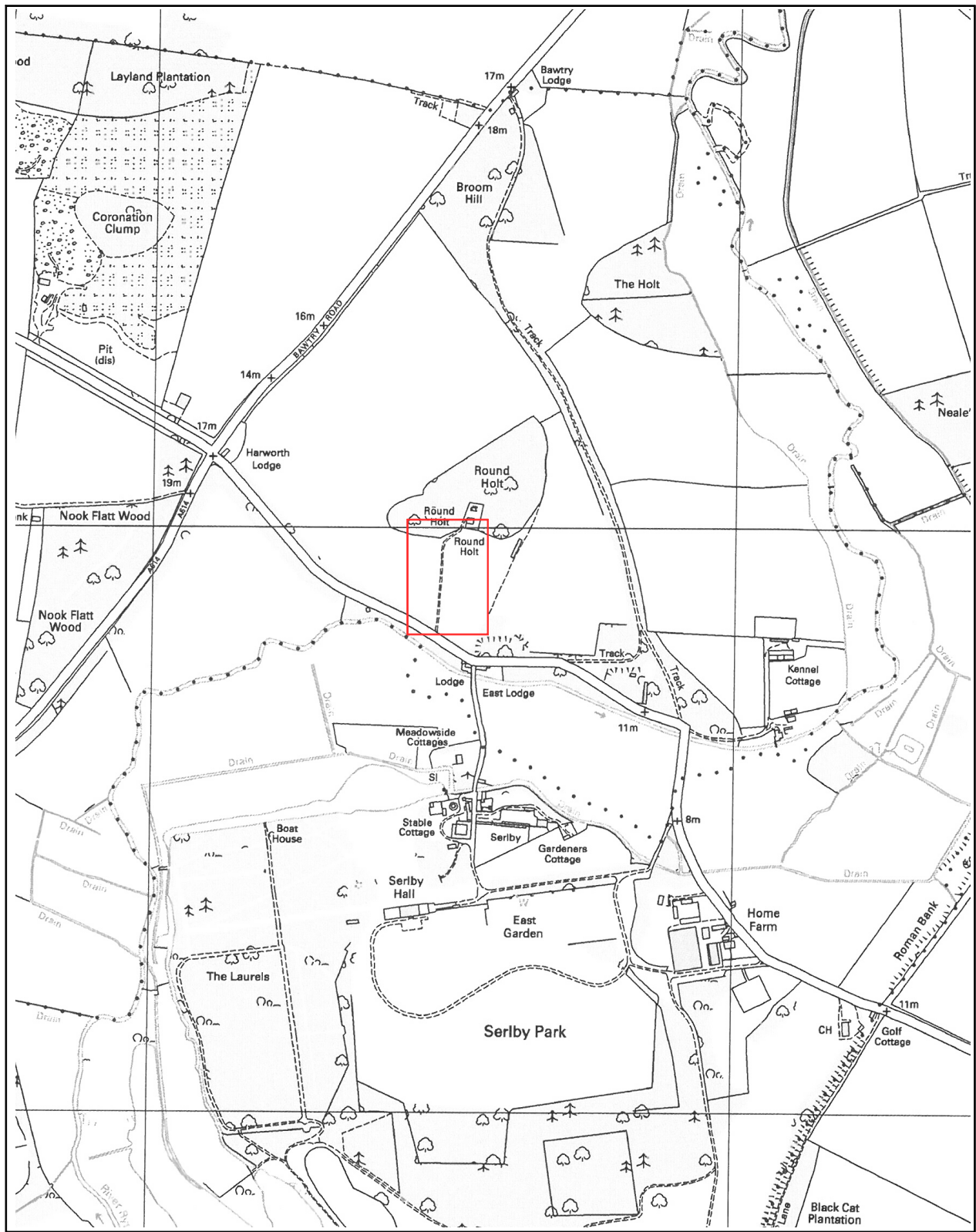
Williams, A and Martin, GH, 2002 *Domesday Book. A Complete Translation*

11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services
 GSGB Geological Survey of Great Britain
 IfA Institute for Archaeologists



Figure 1 - General location plan



SK

Area detailed in Figure 3



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 Archaeological Project Services		
Project Name: Round Holt, Styrrup SESN12		
Scale 1:10000	Drawn by: PCF	Report No: 93/12

Figure 2 - Site location plan

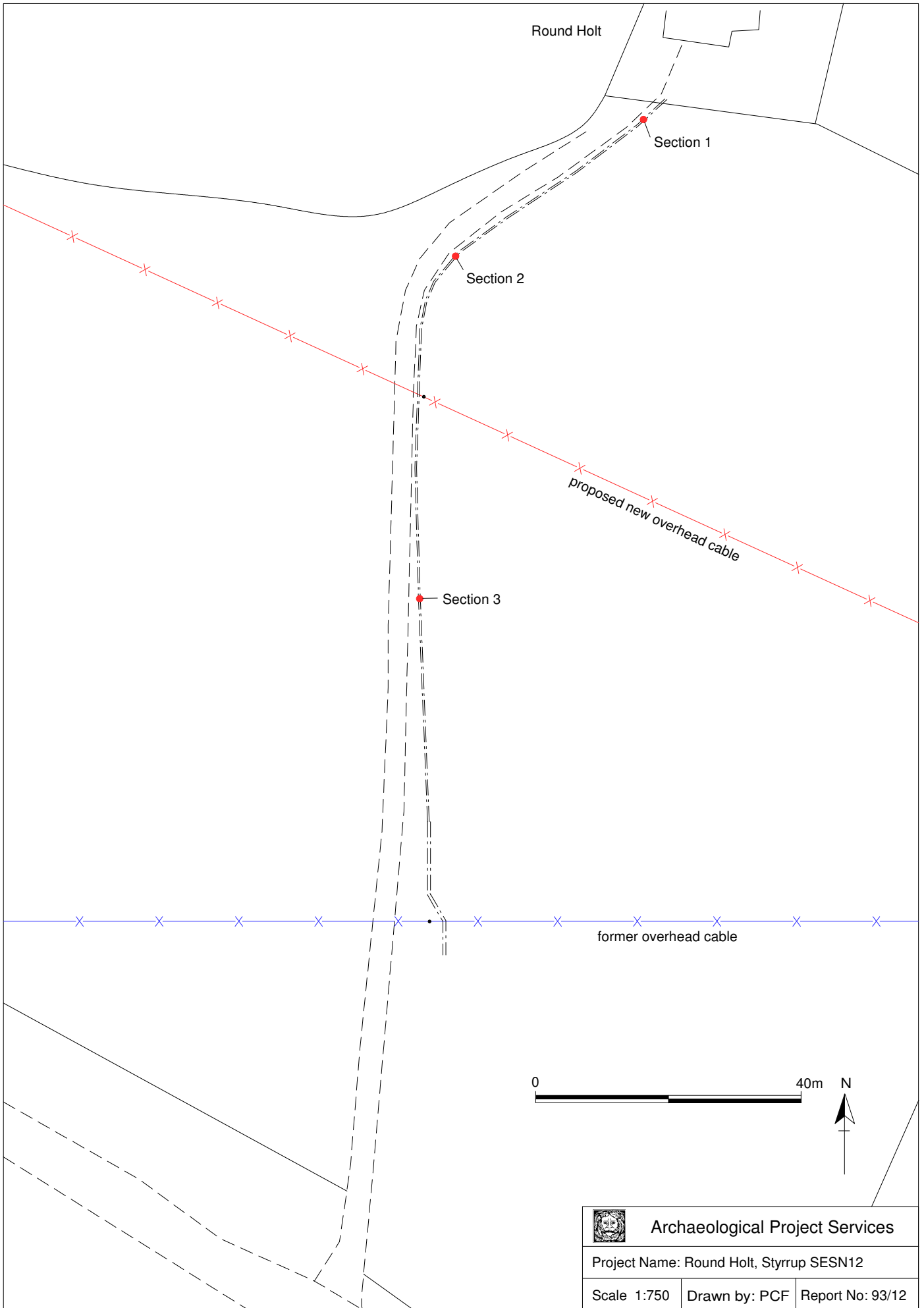
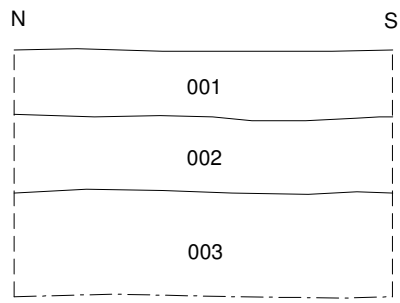
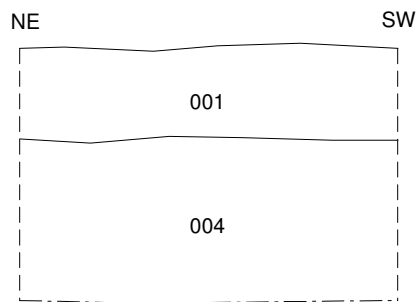


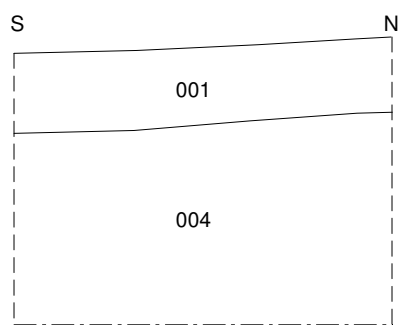
Figure 3 - Plan showing the extent of works and section locations



Section 1



Section 2



Section 3



Archaeological Project Services

Project Name: Round Holt, Styrrup SESN12

Scale 1:20

Drawn by: PCF

Report No: 93/12

Figure 4 - Sections 1 to 3



Plate 1 – General view looking north along the cable trench



Plate 2 - Section 1, looking east



Plate 3 – Section 2, looking southeast



Plate 4 – Section 3, looking west

Appendix 1

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Description	Interpretation
001	Firm mid to dark grey sandy silt, with some gravel from adjacent track, 0.17m thick	Topsoil
002	Firm mid yellowish brown silty sand, 0.2m thick	Subsoil
003	Firm light to mid yellowish brown silty sand, >0.26m thick	Natural deposit
004	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt, 0.25m thick	Topsoil

Appendix 2

THE FINDS

POST ROMAN POTTERY

By Alex Beeby

Introduction

All the material was recorded at archive level in accordance with the guidelines laid out in Slowikowski *et al.* (2001). The pottery codenames (Cname) are in accordance with the Post Roman pottery type series for Lincolnshire, as published in Young *et al.* (2005), which also covers surrounding counties. A total of three sherds from three vessels, weighing 18 grams was recovered from the site.

Methodology

The material was laid out and viewed in context order. Sherds were counted and weighed by individual vessel within each context. The pottery was examined visually and using x20 magnification. This information was then added to an Access database. An archive list of the pottery is included in Table 1 below. The pottery dates to the early modern period.

Condition

The material is fragmentary but not especially abraded.

Results

Table 1, Post Roman Pottery Archive

Cxt	Cname	Full Name	Form	Decoration	Part	Description	Date	NoS	NoV	W(g)
004	ENGS	English Stoneware	Hollow		BS	Probably jar or bottle	19th	1	1	5
004	NOTS	Nottingham Stoneware	Straight sided jar or bottle		BS	Reads "M, NUM 156"	19th	1	1	10
004	PEARL	Pearlware	Flat	Hand painted red decoration over blue transfer print	Rim		L18th-19th	1	1	3
Total								3	3	18

Provenance

All of the material was recovered from the topsoil, context (004).

Range

There are three sherds, all of which are in widely distributed and mass produced domestic pottery types of the 19th century. These include English Stoneware (ENGS), Nottingham Stoneware (NOTS) and Pearlware (PEARL).

Potential

There is no potential for further work. These pieces can be discarded.

Summary

Three pieces of pottery, likely to be 19th century in date, were recovered from the topsoil during the watching brief.

CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL

By Alex Beeby

Introduction

All the material was recorded at archive level in accordance with the guidelines laid out by the ACBMG (2001). A total of three fragments of ceramic building material, weighing 369 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 ceramic building material is fragmentary but fairly fresh.

Results

Table 2, Ceramic Building Material Archive

Cxt	Cname	Full Name	Fabric	Description	date	NoF	W(g)
002	BRK	Brick	Oxidised; medium sandy; Ca; mica	Calcareous grits up to 5mm; common fine Biotite mica	16th-19th	1	77
002	MODERN BRICK	Modern Brick			Late 19th - 20th	1	198
002	PANT	Pantile	Oxidised; medium sandy		18th-19th	1	94
Total						3	369

Provenance

All of the fragments were recovered from subsoil layer (002).

Range

There are three pieces of ceramic building material. This group includes a late 19th or 20th century brick (MODERN BRICK) a piece of Pantile (PANT) dating from the 18th or 19th centuries and a fragment of brick of post-medieval date (BRK).

Potential

There is no potential for further work and there is little point in retaining the assemblage. The material can be discarded.

Summary

Three pieces of ceramic building material were recovered during the watching brief. These came from the subsoil and are of little archaeological interest.

GLASS

By Gary Taylor

Introduction

A single piece of glass weighing 18g was recovered.

Condition

Although naturally fragile the glass is in good condition.

Results

Table 3, Glass Archive

Cxt	Description	NoF	W (g)	Date
004	Green bottle top	1	18	19 th century

Provenance

The glass was recovered from the topsoil (004).

Range

The single piece of glass is the top of the neck and is of mid-late 19th century date.

Potential

Other than providing dating evidence the glass is of very limited potential. The glass can be discarded.

OTHER FINDS

By Gary Taylor

Introduction

Two metal items weighing a total of 923g were recovered.

Condition

Although corroded the items are in moderate-good condition.

Results

Table 4, Other Materials

Cxt	Material	Description	NoF	W (g)	Date
004	Iron	Rod/bar with globular terminal and spatulate end; machinery part or handle of chopping tool, late post-medieval	1	363	19 th -20 th century
	Iron	Spring harrow tine, 19 th -20 th century	1	560	

Provenance

The other finds were retrieved from the topsoil (004).

Range

Two pieces of iron were recovered. One is a tine from a spring harrow and is no earlier than the 19th century. The second piece is of uncertain identification but may be the handle of a chopping tool as the spatulate end appears to narrow to a blade-like edge on one side. Any sheathing that originally may have been around the rod was probably organic and has decayed or become detached.

Potential

The other finds indicate agricultural practices in the area but are otherwise of limited potential and significance. They can be discarded.

SPOT DATING

The dating in Table 5 is based on the evidence provided by the finds detailed above.

Table 5, Spot dates

Cxt	Date	Comments
002	Late 19 th -20 th	Subsoil
004	19 th -20 th	Topsoil

ABBREVIATIONS

ACBMG	Archaeological Ceramic Building Materials Group
BS	Body sherd
CBM	Ceramic Building Material
CXT	Context
NoF	Number of Fragments
NoS	Number of sherds
NoV	Number of vessels
W (g)	Weight (grams)

REFERENCES

~ 2001, *Draft Minimum Standards for the Recovery, Analysis and Publication of Ceramic Building Material*, third version [internet]. Available from <http://www.geocities.com/acbmg1/CBMGDE3.htm>

Slowikowski, AM, Nenk, B and Pearce, J, 2001 *Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics*, Medieval Pottery Research Group Occasional Paper 2

Young, J, Vince, AG and Nailor, V, 2005 *A Corpus of Saxon and Medieval Pottery from Lincoln* (Oxford)

Appendix 3

GLOSSARY

Context	An archaeological context represents a distinct archaeological event or process. For example, the action of digging a pit creates a context (the cut) as does the process of its subsequent backfill (the fill). Each context encountered during an archaeological investigation is allocated a unique number by the archaeologist and a record sheet detailing the description and interpretations of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, <i>e.g.</i> (004).
Cropmark	A mark that is produced by the effect of underlying archaeological features influencing the growth of a particular crop.
Iron Age	A period characterised by the introduction of Iron into the country for tools, between 800 BC and AD 50.
Layer	A layer is a term to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
Medieval	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
Natural	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity.
Post-medieval	The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.
Romano-British	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.
Saxon	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 410-1066 when England was largely settled by tribes from northern Germany.

Appendix 4

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

4	Context records
1	Photographic record sheet
1	Section record sheet
1	Plan record sheet
2	Daily record sheets
1	Sheet of scale drawings
1	Bag of finds

All primary records and finds are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services
The Old School
Cameron Street
Heckington
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 9RW

The ultimate destination of the project archive is:

Bassetlaw Museum
Amcott House
Grove Street
Retford
Nottinghamshire

Archaeological Project Services Site Code:

SESN 12

The discussion and comments provided in this report are based on the archaeology revealed during the site investigations. Other archaeological finds and features may exist on the development site but away from the areas exposed during the course of this fieldwork. *Archaeological Project Services* cannot confirm that those areas unexposed are free from archaeology nor that any archaeology present there is of a similar character to that revealed during the current investigation.

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