
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
ON LAND AT
WINKHILL FARM,
HECKINGTON FEN,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(HFWF09)**

Work Undertaken For
B. Cullen and Sons

December 2009

Report Compiled by
Mark Peachey BA (Hons)

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National Grid Reference: TF 15265 45369
City and County Museum Accession No: 2009.191
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Report No: **130/09**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES**



Quality Control

**Archaeological Watching Brief at
Winkhill Farm, Littleworth Drove,
Heckington Fen,
Lincolnshire
(HFWF09)**

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Supervisor	Bob Garland
Finds Processing	Denise Buckley
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Photographic Reproduction	Mark Peachey
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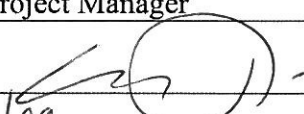

Checked by Project Manager	Approved by Senior Archaeologist
Gary Taylor 	 Tom Lane
Date: 21/12/09	Date: 22-12-09

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Plates

1.	SUMMARY	1
2.	INTRODUCTION.....	1
2.1	DEFINITION OF A WATCHING BRIEF	1
2.2	PLANNING BACKGROUND	1
2.3	TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY	1
2.4	ARCHAEOLOGICAL SETTING	1
3.	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	2
4.	METHODS	2
5.	RESULTS	2
6.	DISCUSSION	3
7.	CONCLUSION	3
8.	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	3
9.	PERSONNEL	3
10.	BIBLIOGRAPHY	3
11.	ABBREVIATIONS	4

Appendices

1. Context summary
2. The Finds *by Anne Boyle, Tom Lane and Gary Taylor*
3. Glossary
4. The Archive

List of Figures

- Figure 1 General location plan
- Figure 2 Site location map
- Figure 3 Detailed Site Location Plan
- Figure 4 Section Location Plan
- Figure 4 Sections 1-5

List of Plates

- Plate 1 General view of trackway looking south
- Plate 2 Trackway representative Section 2 looking east
- Plate 3 Machining area of poultry units looking west
- Plate 4 Poultry units area representative Section 5 looking south

1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on groundworks at Winkhill Farm, Heckington Fen, Lincolnshire because the site was archaeologically sensitive, located close to finds of prehistoric and Roman artefacts.

Although natural deposits were only partially exposed, no archaeological remains other than a layer of dumped hardcore were identified. This hardcore was near a field entrance and was probably laid down to improve passage. Post-medieval artefacts from the subsoil, ploughsoil and topsoil layers suggest the land has had an agricultural function since at least the 17th century. A single prehistoric flint was recovered from the ploughsoil and contributes to the evidence for prehistoric activity in the area.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Definition of a Watching Brief

An archaeological watching brief is defined as: “*a formal program 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 may be disturbed or destroyed.*” (IfA 1999).

2.2 Planning Background

A Planning Application (N/31/0334/09) for the construction of free range poultry units at Winkhill Farm, Heckington Fen, Lincolnshire has been granted by North Kesteven District Council with conditions for an archaeological watching brief during development. Archaeological Project Services (APS) was commissioned by B. Cullen and Sons to undertake this work which was carried out in accordance

with a specification designed by APS and approved by the North Kesteven Planning Archaeologist. The watching brief was undertaken on the 2nd and 3rd December 2009.

2.3 Topography and Geology

Heckington is located 7km east of Sleaford and 32km southwest of Lincoln in the North Kesteven district of Lincolnshire (Fig 1). The site is c. 2km northwest of the village centre, to the east of Winkhill Farm and north of the A17 Heckington bypass, on the north side of Littleworth Drove, at national grid reference TF 15265 45369 (Fig. 2).

The investigation site is on level ground at c. 4m OD. Local soils are the Beccles II Association, typically stagnogleys over permeable clayey subsoil. These soils are developed on sandy gravels (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 119-120).

2.4 Archaeological Setting

Various prehistoric artefacts have been found in the vicinity of the site, including some recovered during fieldwalking. A group of prehistoric flints has been found immediately west of the site and a Bronze Age axe was found a short distance to the southwest. Roman pottery and building materials, probably signifying a settlement of the period, have been found just to the west and southwest of the site. Earthworks thought to represent medieval gravel quarrying have been identified near to Winkhill Farm, about 350m to the west. An archaeological watching brief was previously undertaken here during stripping for a poultry shed. However, the stripped area did not exceed 0.3m depth and as a result only topsoil and subsoil deposits were encountered (Mills 1999).

An investigation in advance of fishing lakes close by revealed a pit and ditches that, although undated, were thought to relate to post-medieval enclosure (Cope-Faulkner 2008).

The site lies in an area now referred to as Winkhill which is first mentioned in documents of the Knight's Templar dating to 1185. Referred to as 'Vincle', the name is derived from the Old English *wincel* and means 'the nook, the corner of land' (Cameron 1998, 140). The Templars had a farm to the west of the site.

This farm later developed into a manor house which is represented by the earthworks of a moat. The manor house was originally approached from the west and had a gatehouse and hall and was finally demolished in 1780 (Roffe and Healey forthcoming).

Heckington itself is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086, referred to as *Echintune*. The name derives from Old English and means the *Tun* (village) called after *Heca* (Cameron 1998, 62). Domesday records a church and priest in the parish, three fisheries, 130 acres of meadow and at least 11 plough teams, with the land owned by, amongst others, the King and Bishop of Lincoln (Foster and Longley 1976).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the work was to record and interpret the deposits and any archaeological features exposed during the development groundwork.

The objectives were to determine the form, function and spatial arrangement of any archaeological features encountered, and, as far as practicable, to recover dating evidence from the features and to establish the sequence of archaeological remains present on the site.

4. METHODS

A watching brief was maintained while the areas of the approach trackway and the poultry units were stripped by mechanical excavator to depths required by the

development (Fig. 3, Plate 1). During and following excavation, the base of the stripped area was examined and representative sides of the trenches were cleaned and rendered vertical. 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 1:10 (Fig. 4). 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 was yellow sandy gravel natural (105) which was revealed intermittently at the base of the stripping in the area of the poultry house. The surface of the natural was about 0.15m below ground level and it was at least 0.14m thick (Fig. 5, Section 5; Plate 4).

Along the route of the access trackway to the poultry house area, the lowest deposit encountered was a brown silty sand subsoil (102) (Fig. 5, Section 1; Plate 2). A piece of 17th century clay pipe was retrieved from this deposit.

Overlying the subsoil was a layer of brownish grey sandy silt with frequent coal and brick/tile fragments (103). This dumped deposit was located near to a field

entrance and was at least 0.16m thick (Fig. 5, Section 2).

Sealing dumped deposit (103) was a topsoil of brown sandy silt (101). A piece of 17th-18th century pottery was recovered from the topsoil. In the area of the poultry shed (Plate 3) the natural was sealed by a ploughsoil of grey silty clay (104) at least 0.17m thick (Fig. 5, Section 5). Pottery of 19th century date and a prehistoric flint were recovered from this deposit.

6. DISCUSSION

Natural yellow sandy gravel (105) was exposed at a depth of about 0.15m below the surface. In the area of the new poultry shed, ploughing had reached to the surface of the natural, as indicated by the ploughsoil (104) directly overlying the sandy gravel (105).

A subsoil (102) survived in the area of the trackway. A 17th century clay pipe was recovered, suggesting that the subsoil was probably formed through agricultural activity in the post-medieval period.

Dumping (103) was encountered near to a field entrance and was probably hardcore laid down to facilitate passage through an adjacent gate in a field boundary. Topsoil (101) and ploughsoil (104) provided the present field surfaces. Artefacts of 18th-19th century date were recovered from these, in addition to a prehistoric flint. This item provides a slight addition to the evidence for prehistoric activity in the area.

7. CONCLUSION

An archaeological watching brief was carried out on groundwork at Winkhill Farm, Heckington Fen, Lincolnshire, as the site lay in an archaeologically sensitive area. Prehistoric and Roman artefacts have been found close by and there are

medieval and post-medieval remains in the vicinity.

However, natural was only revealed in parts and no archaeological remains were encountered. A dump of hardcore was a relatively recent action to assist passage through a field gate. Artefacts of 17th century and later date indicated the land had been in agricultural use through the post-medieval period. However, a worked flint was recovered from the ploughsoil and contributes to the evidence for prehistoric activity in the area.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Mr E. Cullen of B. Cullen & Sons who commissioned the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor who edited this report along with Tom Lane.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Gary Taylor
 Site Supervisor: Bob Garland
 Finds processing: Denise Buckley
 Photographic reproduction: Mark Peachey
 CAD Illustration: Mark Peachey
 Post-excavation analysis: Mark Peachey

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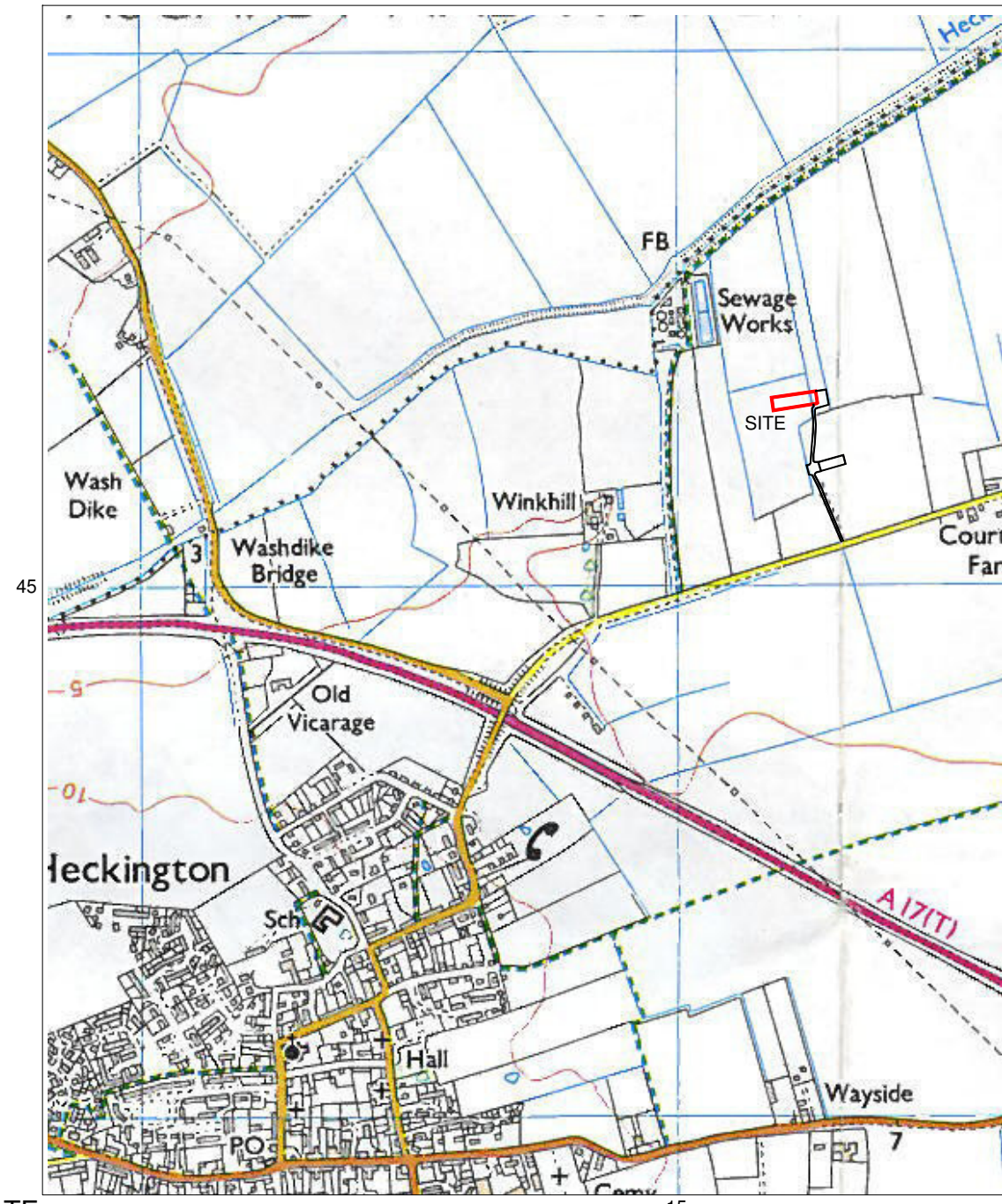
11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services

IfA Institute for Archaeologists



Figure 1: General Location Plan



TF

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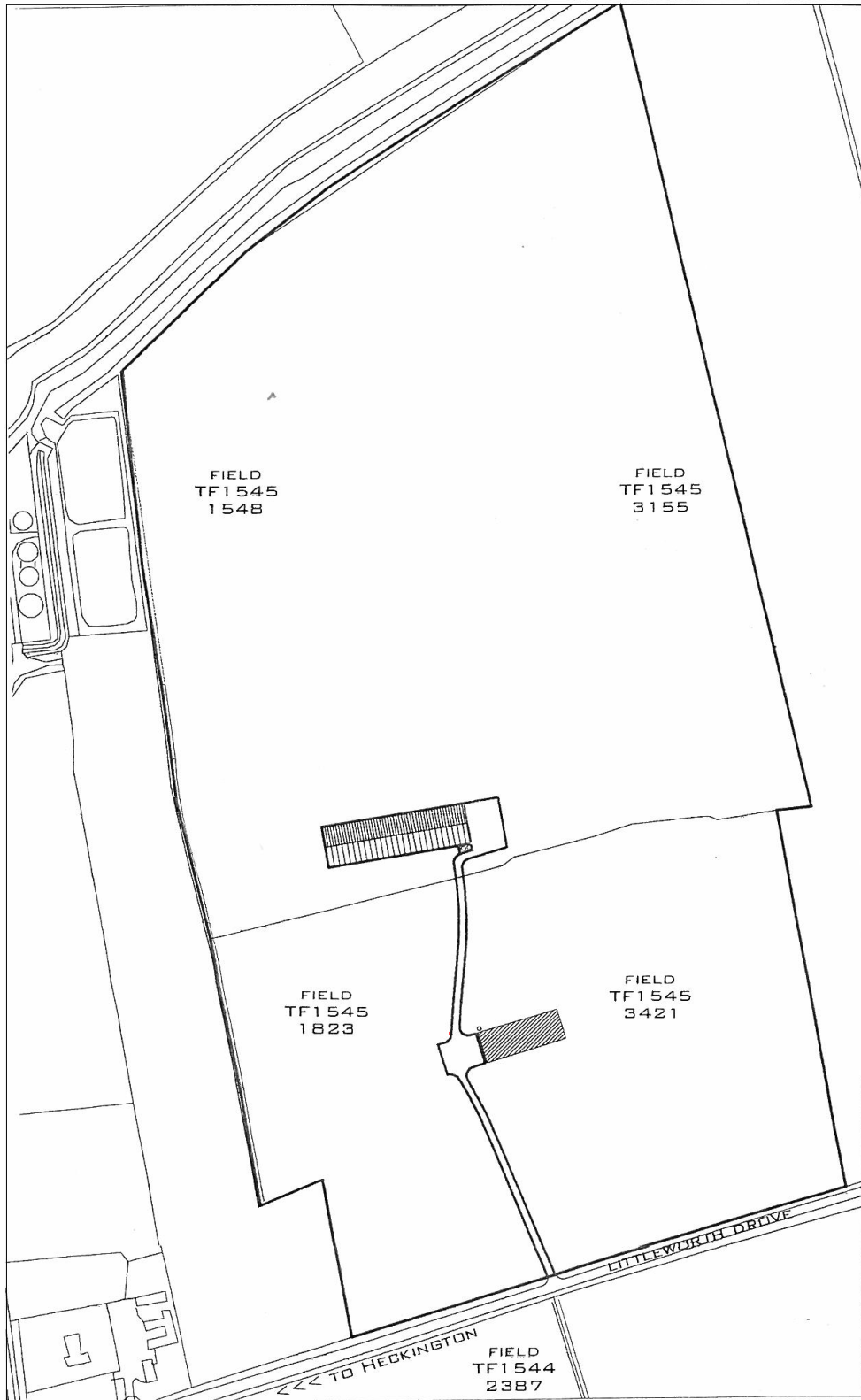
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Project Name: Heckington Winkhill Farm HEWF09		
Scale 1:12500	Drawn by:MJP	Report No: 130/09

Figure 2. Site Location Plan




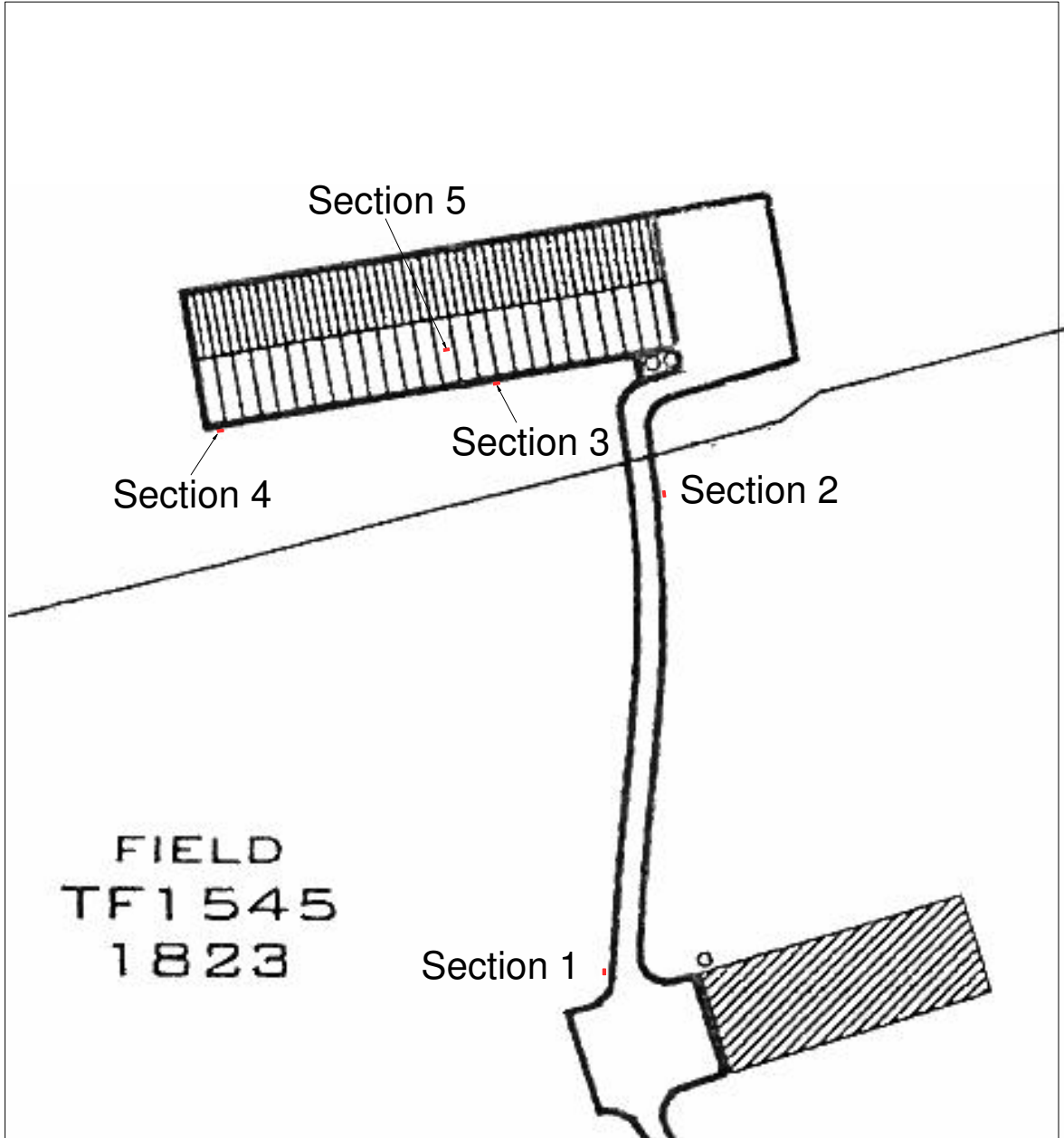
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Figure 3 Detailed Site Location Plan




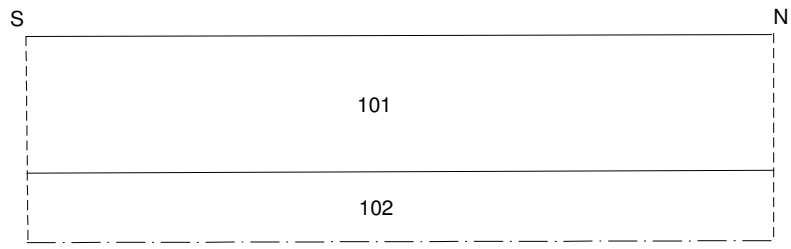
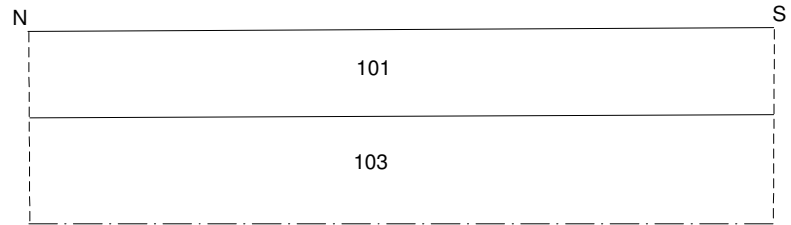
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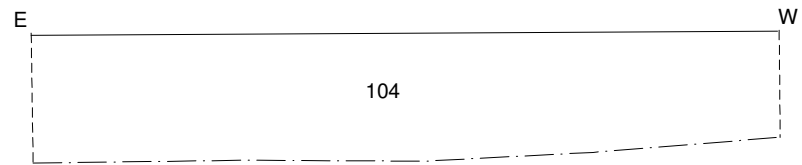
Figure 4 Section Location Plan



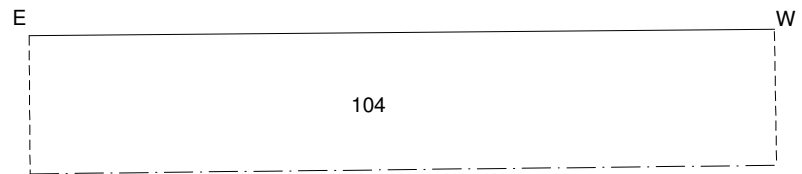
Section 1



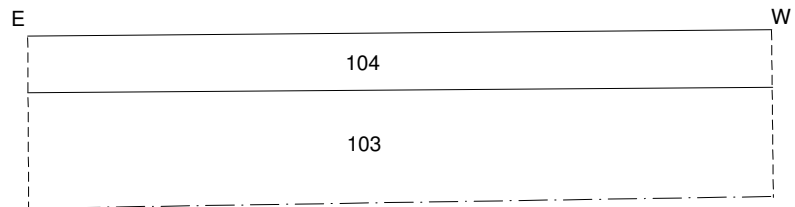
Section 2



Section 3



Section 4



Section 5



Archaeological Project Services

Project Name: Heckington Fen Winkhill Farm HFWF09

Scale 1:20

Drawn by: MJP

Report No: 130/09

Figure 5 Sections 1-5



Plate 1. General view of trackway looking south



Plate 2. Trackway representative Section 2 looking east



Plate 3. Machining area of poultry units looking west



Plate 4. Poultry units area representative Section 5 looking south

Appendix 1

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Description	Interpretation	Date
101	Loose mid brown sandy silt with occasional small rounded and angular gravel, 0.19m thick	Topsoil and turf	Modern
102	Friable pale brown slightly silty sand with occasional rounded and angular small gravel pebbles and occasional flint fragments, 0.09m thick	Subsoil	17 th century
103	Friable mid brownish grey sandy silt with frequent coal and CBM fragments, at least 0.16m deep	Dump reinforcing trackway on approach to north field boundary gateway	
104	Firm grey silty clay with frequent rounded and angular stones, occasional cobbles up to 0.15m by 0.1m, at least 0.17m thick. Heavier than 101.	Ploughsoil	19 th -20 th century
105	Friable yellow sand and gravel at least 0.14m thick	Natural	

Appendix 2

THE FINDS

POST ROMAN POTTERY

By Anne Boyle

Introduction

All the material was recorded at archive level in accordance with the guidelines laid out in Slowikowski *et al.* (2001) and to conform to Lincolnshire County Council's *Archaeology Handbook*. The pottery codenames (Cname) are in accordance with the Post Roman pottery type series for Lincolnshire, as published in Young *et al.* (2005). A total of five sherds from five vessels, weighing 45 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 Archive Catalogue 1, with a summary in Table 1. The pottery ranges in date from the Post-medieval to the early modern period.

Condition

The sherds show expected levels of abrasion.

Results

Table 1, Post Roman Pottery Archive

Cname	Full name	Earliest date	Latest date	NoS	NoV	W (g)
BL	Black-glazed wares	1550	1750	1	1	22
CREA	Creamware	1770	1830	1	1	1
NCBW	19th-century Buff ware	1800	1900	1	1	2
WHITE	Modern whiteware	1850	1900	2	2	20
TOTAL				5	5	45

Provenance

A post-medieval sherd came from topsoil (101), with four early modern sherds retrieved from ploughsoil (104).

Potential

None of the pottery poses any problems for long-term storage. No further work is required.

Summary

A small collection of mid 17th to 20th century pottery was retrieved from two contexts.

CLAY PIPE

By Gary Taylor

Introduction

Analysis of the clay pipes followed the guidance published by Davey (1981) and the material is detailed in the accompanying table.

Condition

The clay pipe is in good, archive-stable condition.

Results

Table 2, Clay Pipes

Context no.	Bore diameter /64"					NoF	W(g)	Comments	Date
	8	7	6	5	4				
102		1				1	2	mouthpiece	17 th century

Provenance

The clay pipe was recovered from the subsoil. It is probably a fairly local product of the Sleaford/Boston area.

Range

A single 17th century stem was found.

Potential

Other than providing dating evidence the clay pipe is of limited significance and potential.

WORKED FLINT

By Tom Lane

Introduction

A single flint weighing 2g was recovered.

Condition

The flint is in good condition.

Results

Table 3, Worked Flint Archive

Cxt	Description	No	Wt (g)	Date
104	Blade, from core preparation, or waste	1	2	neolithic

Provenance

The worked flint is from the ploughsoil.

Range

One Neolithic blade was recovered.

Potential

The single Neolithic flint blade has limited potential though adds to the evidence for prehistoric activity in the area.

SPOT DATING

The dating in Table 4 is based on the evidence provided by the finds detailed above.

Table 4, Spot dates

Cxt	Date	Comments
101	Mid 17th to 18th	Date on a single sherd
102	17th	Based on 1 clay pipe
104	19th to 20th	Also contains a neolithic worked flint

ABBREVIATIONS

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

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- Davey, P. J., 1981, Guidelines for the processing and publication of clay pipes from excavations, *Medieval and Later Pottery in Wales* 4, 65-88
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ARCHIVE CATALOGUES

Archive Catalogue 1, Post Roman Pottery

Cxt	Cname	Fabric	Form	NoS	NoV	W (g)	Decoration	Part	Description	Date
101	BL	Oxidised; medium to coarse sandy	Jar/ bowl	1	1	22		BS		Mid 17th to 18th
104	CREA		?	1	1	1		Base	Flake	Mid/late 18th to 19th
104	NCBW		?	1	1	2	White slipped	BS		19th to early 20th
104	WHITE		Jar	1	1	11		Base		19th to 20th
104	WHITE		Bowl/ dish	1	1	9	Blue floral transfer print	BS	Abraded	19th to 20th

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 interpretation of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, e.g. [004].
Cut	A cut refers to the physical action of digging a posthole, pit, ditch, foundation trench, etc. Once the fills of these features are removed during an archaeological investigation the original 'cut' is therefore exposed and subsequently recorded.
Domesday Survey	A survey of property ownership in England compiled on the instruction of William I for taxation purposes in 1086 AD.
Fill	Once a feature has been dug it begins to silt up (either slowly or rapidly) or it can be back-filled manually. The soil(s) that become contained by the 'cut' are referred to as its fill(s).
Layer	A layer is a term used 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
Old English	The language used by the Saxon (q.v.) occupants of Britain.
Post-medieval	The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.
Saxon	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 410-1066 when England was largely settled by tribes from northern Germany and adjacent areas.

Appendix 4

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

1	Context register sheet
5	Context record sheets
1	Photographic record sheet
1	Plan record sheet
1	Section record sheet
2	Daily record sheets
2	Sheets of scale drawings
1	Bag of finds

All primary records 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:

The Collection
Danes Terrace
Lincoln
LN2 1LP

The archive will be deposited in accordance with the document titled *Conditions for the Acceptance of Project Archives*, produced by the Lincolnshire City and County Museum.

The Collection Accession Number: 2009.191

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: HFWF 09

OASIS Record No: archaeol1-69675

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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