
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND
RECORDING AT PLOT 3,
RIDER GARDENS,
FISHTOFT,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(FIRG 10)**

**Work Undertaken For
Sovereign Homes (UK) Limited**

October 2010

Report Compiled by
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APS Report No. **103/10**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES**



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1. SUMMARY

A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken during groundworks at Rider Gardens, Fishtoft, Lincolnshire. The watching brief monitored the excavation of foundation trenches for a new detached dwelling.

The site lies within an area of archaeological interest where previous investigations immediately to the south of the site have revealed Late Saxon settlement. Remains of this period included ditched enclosures and two buildings along with a significant amount of fired clay which may represent saltmaking at the site, or alternatively building remains possibly associated with a catastrophic fire. Investigations to the north of the site have identified medieval activity including possible salt-making of 13th century date.

The watching brief revealed a sequence of natural, medieval and recent deposits. A large pit was dated to the medieval period, though does not appear to be related to the salt-making previously identified in the vicinity.

Finds retrieved during the investigation include pottery, including a sherd of early medieval date, daub, solidified silt and animal bone.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Sovereign Homes (UK) Limited to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during groundworks associated with new residential development at Plot 3, Rider Gardens, Fishtoft, Lincolnshire. Approval for the development was sought through the submission of planning application B/06/0081. The watching brief was carried out on the 11th and 12th October 2010 in

accordance with a specification prepared by Archaeological Project Services and approved by the Boston Borough Planning Archaeologist.

2.2 Topography and Geology

Fishtoft is located 3km southeast of Boston in the administrative district of Boston Borough, Lincolnshire (Fig 1).

The site is located 2km west of the centre of Fishtoft as defined by the parish church of St Guthlac at National Grid Reference TF 3450 4305 (Fig. 2). The site lies to the north of Rider Gardens, immediately west of its junction with Whitehouse Lane. The site lies at a height of c. 2.1m OD on generally level ground.

Local soils are of the Tanvats/Rockcliffe Series, typically fine silty alluvial gley soils (Robson 1990, 31). These are developed upon a drift geology of marine deposits which overlie a solid geology of Jurassic clays and mudstones of the Ancholme Group (BGS 1995).

2.3 Archaeological Setting

Although prehistoric remains are known from the vicinity of Fishtoft itself, the development site lies closer to Boston where few prehistoric remains have been recovered.

Roman remains have been recorded at the site of Fogerty's Factory c. 500m south of the site, though here the remains lay beneath approximately 3m of silt and alluvium. However, occasionally in the Boston area, sites relating to Roman settlement occur closer to the present ground level, where sub-surface 'islands' or elevations outcrop through post-glacial sediment formations (Palmer-Brown and Johnson 1997, 3).

The site itself lies within an area of archaeological sensitivity. Previous investigations have revealed important and

well preserved Late Saxon settlement features immediately to the south. It appears that this site was occupied on a permanent basis with the community engaged in the farming of animals and the practice of agriculture (*ibid*, 37). The investigations identified substantial ditches containing well-preserved (due to waterlogging) remains of two possible buildings. The presence of burnt silt/clay fragments from secondary contexts found within almost all of the Late Saxon features may represent saltmaking at the site, or alternatively building remains, possibly associated with a catastrophic fire (*ibid.*). It appears the site was abandoned by the middle of the 10th century or earlier.

To the north of the development site features dating from the 13th century have been identified, along with possible evidence for saltmaking of the same date. Although no hearths or briquetage forms were retrieved, steep-sided pits associated with standing water and backfilled with deposits containing large lumps of fired clay were uncovered, along with a natural pool or channel overlain by a spread of fired clay fragments (Palmer-Brown 1995, 17).

Fishtoft is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of c. 1086 when it is referred to as *Toft*. This name is Old Danish in origin (Cameron 1998, 44), and the prefix is first documented in the 17th century. At the time of Domesday the land was held by Count Alan and Guy of Craon and contained a church with a priest, a mill and 80 acres of meadow (Foster and Longley 1976).

A watching brief undertaken immediately east of the site revealed a sequence of alluvial deposits of uncertain date, a post-medieval pit and recent topsoil deposits (Failes 2009, 1).

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

Prior to the excavation of foundation trenches, topsoil was stripped from the site. Foundation trenches were then excavated by machine to depths of up to 0.75m below the stripped level. 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 1:10 and 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 at the base of the foundation trenches was a

natural layer of brownish grey clayey silt (006). This measured in excess of 0.2m thick and was in turn sealed by bluish grey clayey silt (005) that measured 0.13m thick (Fig. 4, Section 1; Plate 2).

Possibly also of natural origin was a layer of brown silt (004) recorded on the east side of the plot.

Cut into the natural clayey silt (005) was a sub-rectangular pit (009) measuring over 3.4m long, over 1.65m wide and 0.3m deep (Fig. 4, Sections 2 and 3; Plates 3 and 4). A fill of organic grey clayey silt (008) was recorded which was sealed beneath a layer of grey silt (007) which spread beyond the limit of the pit. Finds from the pit comprise three sherds of pottery, of which one dates to the 11th – 12th century, along with daub, animal bone and baked or solidified silt.

Sealing all deposits was the modern topsoil of brown silt (001) or compacted greyish brown clayey silt (002) and grey silt (003). The latter deposits derive from the former use of the site as a transport yard.

6. DISCUSSION

Natural deposits of clayey silt and silt relate to the underlying drift geology of marine derived alluvium.

A large pit of probable Saxo-Norman or medieval date was recorded cut into natural layers. The function of the feature is not clear though it seems unlikely to be related to salt-making activities despite the presence of baked silt.

Medieval pottery, animal bone and daub were retrieved from the investigation.

7. CONCLUSION

A programme of archaeological

monitoring and recording was undertaken at Rider Gardens, Fishtoft, as the site lay close to previous discoveries of Late Saxon settlement and medieval salt-making.

However, no definite evidence for Late Saxon activity was identified. A single pit however of Saxo-Norman or medieval date was recorded for which no function was ascertained.

Finds from the investigation comprise pottery, daub and baked or solidified silt. A small number of animal bones were also collected.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Mr A Brotherton of Sovereign Homes (UK) Limited for commissioning the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor who edited this report along with Tom Lane. Jenny Young, the Boston Borough Planning Archaeologist, kindly allowed access to the parish files and library maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

9. PERSONNEL

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

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11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services

BGS British Geological Survey

PCA Pre-Construct Archaeology



Figure 1 - General location plan

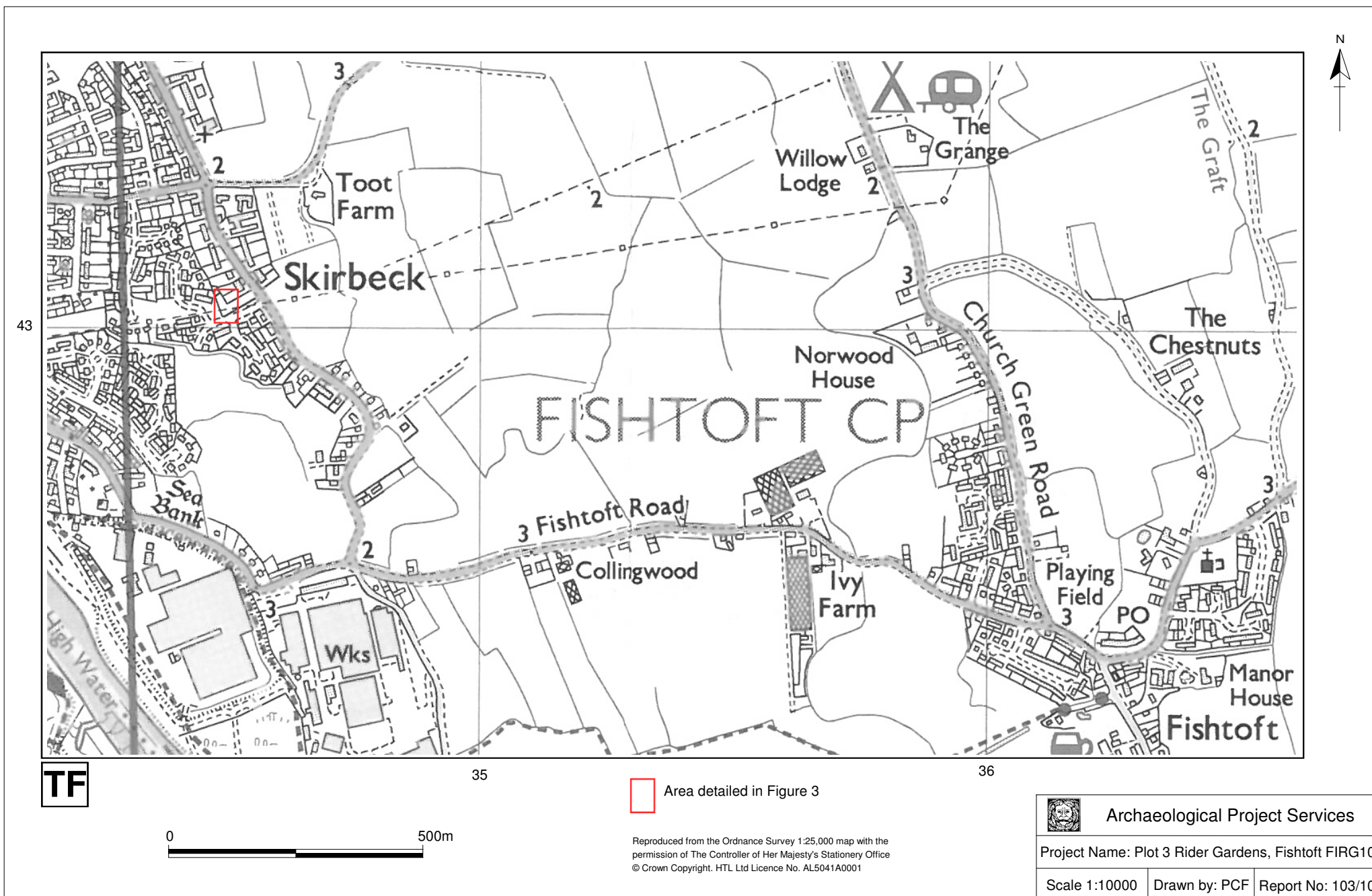


Figure 2 - Site location plan

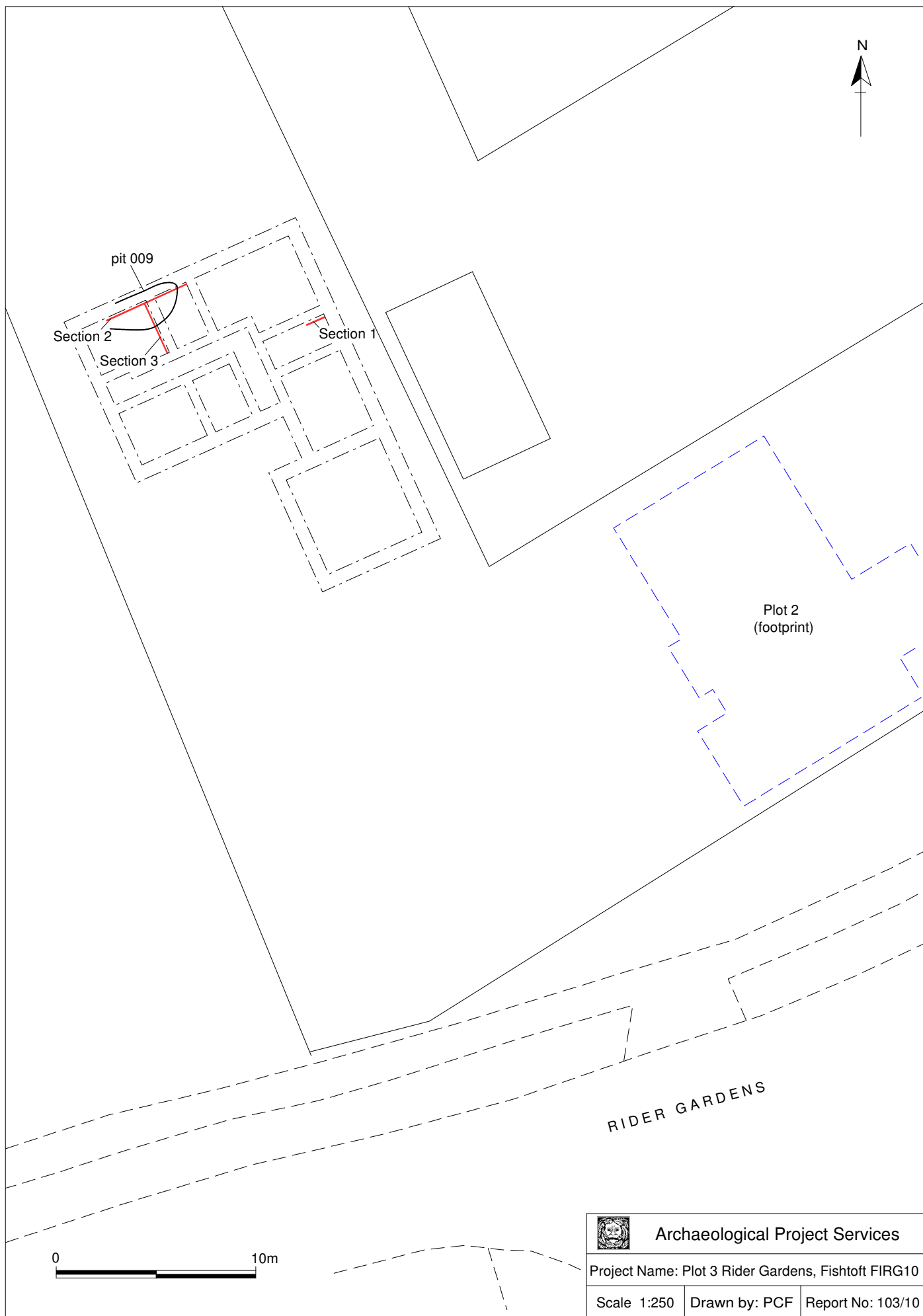
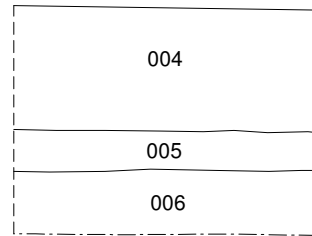
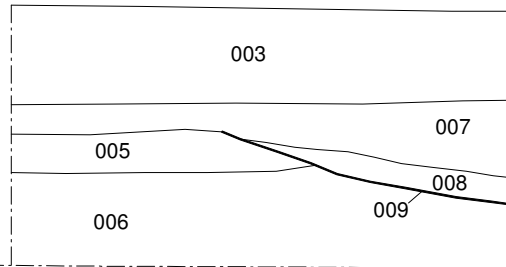


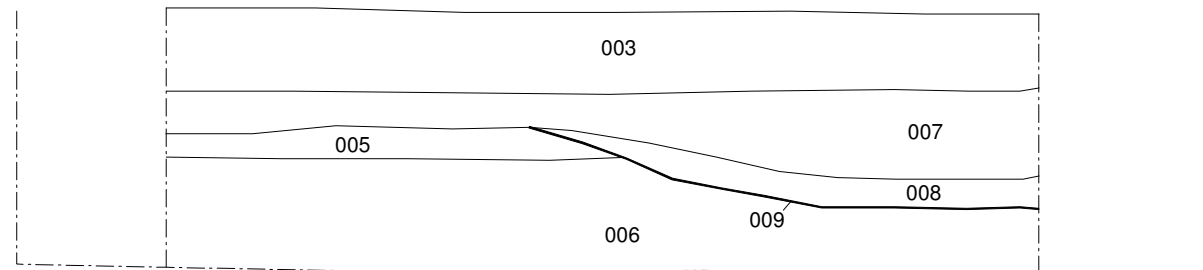
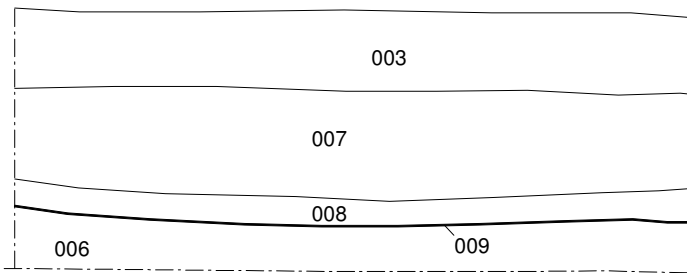
Figure 3 - Plan of the development showing section locations



Section 1



Section 2



Section 3



Archaeological Project Services

Project Name: Plot 3 Rider Gardens, Fishtoft FIRG10

Scale 1:25

Drawn by: PCF

Report No: 103/10

Figure 4 - Sections 1 to 3



Plate 1 – View looking northwest of the development area



Plate 2 – Section 1, looking east



Plate 3 – Section 2 showing pit (009), looking east



Plate 4 – Section 3 showing pit (009), looking southwest

Appendix 1

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Description	Interpretation
001	Firm dark brown silt, 0.2m thick	Topsoil
002	Firm dark greyish brown clayey silt	Compacted topsoil
003	Firm and compact mid grey silt	Compacted topsoil
004	Firm mid brown silt	Compacted natural deposit
005	Firm to stiff light bluish grey clayey silt, 0.13m thick	Natural deposit
006	Firm to stiff mid brownish grey clayey silt, >0.2m thick	Natural deposit
007	Firm mid grey silt	Fill of (009)
008	Firm dark grey clayey silt	Fill of (009)
009	?sub-rectangular feature, >3.4m long by >1.65m wide by 0.3m deep, gradual sides and flat base	Pit

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) 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 3 sherds from 3 vessels, weighing 11 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. At least one sherd dates to the medieval period.

Condition

All three sherds are abraded and have leached shell inclusion hollows. This leaching is most probably caused by soil conditions.

Results

Table 1, Post Roman Pottery Archive

Cxt	Cname	Form	Part	Description	Date	NoS	NoV	W(g)
008	MISC	?	BS	Leached shell tempered fabric; vessel possibly handmade?; undatable; very abraded; Roman? Med?	?	1	1	5
008	MISC	?	BS	Tiny frag; Sooted exterior; leached fabric; abraded; late Saxon?	Post Roman	1	1	1
008	SLQF	Jar	BS	Leached; abraded	11th-12th	1	1	5
Total						3	3	11

Provenance

All of the material was recovered from (008) within pit [009].

Range

There are three small sherds from three vessels in separate shell tempered fabrics. Only one of the pieces is identifiable; this is South Lincolnshire Quartz and Iron tempered (SLQF).

Potential

There is little potential for further work. The pottery should be retained as part of the site archive and should pose no problems for long term storage.

Summary

Three sherds of pottery were recovered from a single pit during the investigation. At least one of these pieces dates to the medieval period (11th-12th century).

FIRED CLAY

By Alex Beeby

Introduction

The material was recorded at archive level in accordance with the guidelines laid out in the Lincolnshire County Council's *Archaeology Handbook*.

Methodology

The fired clay was laid out, counted and then weighed. This information was then added to an Access database. An archive list is included in Table 2 below.

Condition

The piece of fired clay is relatively unabraded.

Results

Table 2, Fired Clay Archive

Cxt	Fabric	Sub type	NoF	W (g)	Description
008	Reduced	Daub	1	16	Two flat surfaces at angle; wattle impression

Provenance

The material was recovered from (008) within pit [009].

Range

There is a single piece of daub.

Potential

There is little potential for further work. The fired clay should be retained as part of the site archive and should pose no problems for long term storage.

Summary

A single piece of fired clay (daub) was recovered during the watching brief.

FAUNAL REMAINS

By Paul Cope-Faulkner

Introduction

A total of 3 (23g) fragments of animal bone were recovered from stratified contexts.

Provenance

The bone was retrieved from the fill of a pit.

Condition

The overall condition of the remains was good..

Results

Table 3, Fragments Identified to Taxa

Cxt	Taxon	Element	Number	W (g)	Comments
008	sheep/goat	radius	1	13	
	sheep/goat	molar	1	4	
	medium mammal	?humerus	1	6	

Summary

As a small collection, the animal bone is of limited potential other than to indicate sheep or goat were being kept near the site. It should be retained as part of the site archive.

OTHER FINDS

By Gary Taylor

Introduction

One other find weighing 13g was recovered.

Condition

The other find is in good condition.

Results

Table 4, Other Materials

Cxt	Material	Description	NoF	W (g)	Date
008	silt	Baked/solidified silt	1	13	

Provenance

The other find was recovered from a pit fill.

Range

A single piece of baked/solidified silt was recovered.

Potential

The single piece of baked silt is of very limited potential and could 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
008	11 th – 12 th century	Based on 1 sherd

ABBREVIATIONS

ACBMG	Archaeological Ceramic Building Materials Group
BS	Body sherd
CBM	Ceramic Building Material
CXT	Context
LHJ	Lower Handle Join
NoF	Number of Fragments
NoS	Number of sherds
NoV	Number of vessels
PCRG	Prehistoric Ceramic Research Group
TR	Trench
UHJ	Upper Handle Join
W (g)	Weight (grams)

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Appendix 3

GLOSSARY

Alluvium	A deposit (usually clay, silts or sands) laid down in water. Marine alluvium is deposited by the sea and freshwater alluvium by streams, rivers or within lakes.
Briquetage	A term given to fragments of ceramic equipment and hearth/oven remains from the processing of salt.
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).
Cut	A cut refers to the physical action of digging a posthole, pit, ditch, foundation trench, <i>etc.</i> Once the fills of these features are removed during an archaeological investigation the original 'cut' is therefore exposed and subsequently recorded.
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) which become contained by the 'cut' are referred to as its fill(s).
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.
Prehistoric	The period of human history prior to the introduction of writing. In Britain the prehistoric period lasts from the first evidence of human occupation about 500,000 BC, until the Roman invasion in the middle of the 1 st century AD.
Romano-British	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.
Saltern	Salt producing site typified by ash, derived from fuel needed to evaporate sea water, and briquetage.
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:

9	Context records
1	Photographic record sheet
5	Sheets of scale drawings
1	Stratigraphic matrix
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:

The Collection
Art and Archaeology in Lincolnshire
Danes Terrace
Lincoln
LN2 1LP

Accession Number:

LCNCC: 2010.118

Archaeological Project Services Site Code:

FIRG10

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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