

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT:

LAND FRONTING ORANGE GROVE, 10 NORFOLK STREET, WISBECH, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Planning Reference: F/YR11/0216/EXTIME

NGR: TF 4642 0942

AAL Site Code: WIOG 14

OASIS Reference Number: allenarc1-206817



Report prepared for The Debnam Group

By
Allen Archaeology Limited
Report Number AAL 2015079

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Allenarchaeology



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Cover image: General view of the site, looking southeast

Executive Summary

- Allen Archaeology Limited was commissioned by The Debnam Group to undertake an archaeological watching brief on land fronting Orange Grove, 10 Norfolk Street, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire.
- The site lies in an area of archaeological potential, particularly for medieval and post-medieval periods, with the former medieval castle to the north of the site and the medieval historic core of the town to the south.
- The watching brief exposed a sequence of made ground, levelling layers and dumps of a probable post-medieval and later date, as well as a possible terrace cut, producing small quantities of medieval and post-medieval pottery. It is possible that stratified archaeological deposits survive on site below the level of impact of the groundworks.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Allen Archaeology Limited was commissioned by The Debnam Group to undertake an archaeological watching brief on land fronting Orange Grove, 10 Norfolk Street, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, as a condition of planning consent for a proposed residential and commercial development.
- 1.2 The excavation, recording and reporting conformed to current national guidelines, as set out in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists '*Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*' (CIfA 2014), the regional guidelines in '*Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England*' (Medlycott 2011), a brief prepared by the Historic Environment Team at Cambridgeshire County Council (Gdaniec 2013), and a specification prepared by this company (AAL 2014).

2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 Wisbech is located in the administrative district of Fenland District Council in Cambridgeshire, approximately 19.7km southwest of central King's Lynn and 29.7km east-northeast of central Peterborough. The site is located c.0.5km to the south-southeast of the traditional core of the settlement at 10 Norfolk Street, and centres on NGR TF 4642 0942.
- 2.2 The site is located on a bedrock geology of Ampthill Clay Formation mudstone, with the superficial geology recorded as Tidal Flat Deposits – Clay and Silt (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

3.0 Planning Background

- 3.1 Full planning permission has been granted for the '*Erection of a block of 6 x 1-bed flats and cycle store (Renewal of planning permission F/YR08/0108/F)*' (Planning Application Reference F/YR11/0216/EXTIME). The permission was granted subject to conditions, including the undertaking of a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during all associated groundworks.
- 3.2 The approach adopted is consistent with the guidelines that are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012).

4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 4.1 The site lies in an area of archaeological potential, particularly for medieval and post-medieval periods. Immediately north of the site is the former site of Wisbech castle, removed in the 18th century (HER 01926). The development site itself lies between the medieval centre of Wisbech and the later post-medieval growth of the town.
- 4.2 A Neolithic flaked flint axe represents the earliest evidence of human activity in the immediate area, and was reportedly found in the 1970s during construction works at the Station Hotel site (HER 17756) just over 750m to the northwest, however this appears to be an isolated find.

- 4.3 A fragmentary early Iron Age bronze scabbard containing remains of the iron blade was revealed in the 19th century 650m to the southwest. The scabbard bears a finely executed ornament of symmetrical linked spiral motifs.
- 4.4 Also found with the scabbard were seventeen Roman coins ranging from the 3rd to 4th century AD (HER 03910) and a single sherd of painted Roman pottery (HER 03891). More Roman finds are concentrated on the eastern bank of the River Nene, including a greyware cup found in 1930 (HER 03889) and two more Roman coins found during railway construction in 1845 (HER 03934).
- 4.5 The settlement is first recorded as '*Wisbece*' in the Domesday Book of 1086 (Williams and Martin 2002) being a small fishing village and church, all owned by the Abbot of Ely. The first recorded defensive structure built at Wisbech was soon after the Norman Conquest c.1071, although it is possible that there was a Saxon precursor, with a Saxon brooch being found within the castle moat in the 19th century (HER 01926a). The castle itself was constructed of stone, and the buildings covered two acres, the whole area of the castle being four acres. A single sherd of late medieval pottery was found from the upper filling of the Castle moat, recovered during contractors' work in 1955. The castle was still standing at the time of the English Civil War, when it was refortified and a further redoubt was built at Horseshoe Sluice. A sketch plan of the castle made in 1794 when it was pulled down showed it to be circular and of the motte and bailey style.
- 4.6 Archaeological evidence recorded in the immediate vicinity of the site is of medieval to post-medieval date. Excavations in 2004 revealed the remains of a medieval church terrace 100m metres to the north, peripheral to the medieval settlement in Wisbech. Midden deposits and other evidence of human activity dating to the 13th – 15th centuries were recorded 25m south east of the site and a small evaluation encountered two pits containing post-medieval material and the remains of a brick built culvert dating to the mid-19th century.

5.0 Methodology

- 5.1 The methodology was for an intensive watching brief, requiring an experienced field archaeologist to be present during all groundwork excavations. They acted strictly in accordance with the contents of this document, and were familiar with the national and local guidelines regarding agreed best practice for archaeological monitoring and recording projects (CIfA 2014). The fieldwork was undertaken over three days; Monday 9th, Thursday 12th and Tuesday 17th June 2014.
- 5.2 All groundworks were carried out using a mechanical excavator, which was fitted with a toothed bucket for removing obstructions and a toothless bucket for general groundworks.
- 5.3 A full written record of the archaeological deposits was made on standard AAL context sheets. Archaeological deposits were drawn in plan and section (at appropriate scales). Colour photography formed an integral part of the recording strategy, with photographs referenced with an identification board, scales and a directional arrow.

6.0 Results (Figures 2 and 3)

- 6.1 The earliest dated deposit was recorded at the southern end of the site and consisted of a 0.3m thick compact mid yellowish grey sandy silt alluvium 104 from which a fragment of 17th century clay tobacco pipe was retrieved (Plate 1). This deposit was cut by a near vertical terracing cut [105] containing a dark grey silt 106.



Plate 1: West facing section of 100 - 104, 1m and 0.5m scales

- 6.2 A c.0.6m diameter, steep sided pit [107] was recorded cutting terracing layer 106 towards the southern end of the site (Plate 2). It contained a 0.3m thick mid greyish yellow sandy silt primary fill 109, sealed by a mid-brownish red sand with very frequent small coarse sand, stones and occasional pebbles 108, both of which were undated.



Plate 2: South facing section of pit [107], 1m and 0.5m scales

- 6.3 Sealing deposits 104 and 106 was a 0.3m thick compact brownish grey sandy silt 103. Towards the north end of the plot this was recorded as 110 and produced two sherds of pottery; one of 13th to 15th century date and one of 16th to 17th century date. A fragment 16th to 17th century roof tile was also recovered from this deposit.
- 6.4 A 0.17m thick made ground 102, containing three sherds of 13th to 16th century pottery, sealed 103 at the southern end of the site, and in turn was overlain by a sequence of modern building demolition material 101 and a gravel layer 100.

- 6.5 Recorded at the northern end of the site sealing 110 was a sequence of clayey silt 111 and sandy silt 112, 113, 114 and 115 (Plate 3), interpreted as demolition/dumping layers. A single sherd of 13th to 15th century pottery was recovered from layer 113.



Plate 3: East facing section showing layers 110-115, 1m scale

7.0 Discussion and Conclusions

- 7.1 The groundworks exposed few features of archaeological interest, with the sequence generally comprising a series of dumps and levelling/ground raising layers. Dating evidence comprised a small assemblage of ceramic material ranging in date from the medieval to post-medieval periods. The stratigraphically earliest layers to produce dating evidence were of a 16th to 17th century date, suggesting that earlier stratified deposits may survive on site below the depth of impact of the groundworks.

8.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

- 8.1 The methodology employed was appropriate to the nature and extent of the development. It has demonstrated that the development has had a limited impact upon the local archaeological resource.

9.0 Acknowledgements

- 9.1 Allen Archaeology Limited would like to thank The Debnam Group for this commission. Thanks also go to the groundworkers for their cooperation during the archaeological monitoring.

10.0 References

AAL, 2014, *Specification for archaeological monitoring and recording: Land fronting Orange Grove, 10 Norfolk Street, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire*, Allen Archaeology Limited

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Williams, A. and Martin, G.H., 2002, *Domesday Book: a complete translation*, Penguin, London

Appendix 1: Pottery and Ceramic Building Material Report

THE CERAMIC FINDS

Dr Anne Irving

THE POTTERY

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 pottery type series for Lincolnshire. A total of seven sherds from seven vessels, weighing 193 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. The pottery dates from the medieval to the post-medieval period.

Results

Table 1: Pottery Archive

Cxt	Cname	Full name	Fabric	Form	NoS	NoV	W (g)	Part	Description	Date
102	BOU	Bourne D ware	Smooth	Jug/ jar	1	1	17	BS		Mid 14th to 16th
102	GRIM	Grimston ware		Jug	1	1	56	Handle	Small oval handle; soot; very abraded	13th to 15th
102	GRIM	Grimston ware		Jug/ jar	1	1	13	BS		13th to 15th
110	GRE	Glazed Red Earthenware		Jar/ bowl	1	1	43	Base	Stacking scar on underside; soot	16th to mid 17th
110	TOY	Toynton Medieval Ware		Jug/ jar	1	1	2	BS		Late 13th to 15th
111	BOU	Bourne D ware	Smooth + ca	Jug	1	1	39	LHJ	Internal white deposit	Mid 14th to 16th
113	GRIM	Grimston ware		Jug/ jar	1	1	23	BS		13th to 15th

Potential

The sherds are stable and suitable for long-term storage. No further work is required on the assemblage.

THE CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL

Introduction

All the material was recorded at archive level in accordance with the guidelines laid out by the ACBMG (2001) and to conform to Lincolnshire County Council's *Archaeology Handbook*.

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.

Results

Table 2: Ceramic Building Material Archive

Cxt	Cname	Full name	NoF	W (g)	Description	Date
110	CBM	Ceramic Building Material	3	45	Very abraded; handmade	16th to 18th

Potential

The fragments are stable and suitable for long-term storage. No further work is required on the assemblage.

SPOT DATING

The dating in Table 3 is based on the evidence provided by the finds detailed above.

Table 3: Spot Dates

Cxt	Date	Comments
102	13th to 15th	
110	16th to mid-17th	
111	Mid 14th to 16th	Date on a single sherd
113	13th to 15th	Date on a single 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
TR	Trench
UHJ	Upper Handle Join
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>>

2010, *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook* [internet]. Available at <<http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/section.asp?catId=3155>>

Slowikowski, A. M., 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, A.G. and Nailor, V., 2005, *A Corpus of Saxon and Medieval Pottery from Lincoln* (Oxford)

Appendix 2: Clay Tobacco Pipe Report

Mike Wood

Introduction

Five fragments of clay tobacco pipe stems weighing 29g were recovered during archaeological work at Orange Grove, Wisbech. All of the finds date to the mid to late 17th century.

Methodology

The material was counted and weighed in grams, then examined visually to identify any diagnostic pieces and the overall condition of the assemblage. Reference was made to published guidelines (Higgins & Davey 2004). Where no other identification has been possible, stems have been dated by established stem bore guidelines (Oswald 1975). It should be noted that dates provided by stem bore size can have an appreciable margin for error and are intended only as a general guide. A summary of the material is recorded in Table 1.

Assemblage

Context	Date range	Stems	Bowls	Weight (g)	Stem bore	Comments
102	1682-1757	2	-	5	5/64"	Snapped stems. Fairly fresh breaks.
102	1687-1712	2	-	12	6/64"	Thick stems, old breaks.
104	1650-1680	-	1	12	-	Bowl with swollen rear and overhanging front; broad sub-circular foot, slightly off-aligned seam suggesting poor manufacture. Polished. Roughly trimmed lip with slight rilling to front of bowl.

Table 4: Clay tobacco pipe

Discussion

The assemblage contained fragments of clay tobacco pipe stems and a single bowl. Stem thickness and borehole size can fluctuate depending on individual manufacturers and the bowl date should be taken as the most accurate for this small assemblage. The bowl is typical of the bulbous types made in the mid-late 17th century and has a foot that can be characterised as a type vi which would be common on mid-17th century examples from Lincoln kilns (Mann 1977, 49), although it is not possible to determine where this example has been made.

Such a limited assemblage offers no opportunity for further analysis.

Recommendations for further work

No further work is recommended. All of the artefacts could be returned to the landowner or be discarded.

References

Atkinson, D and Oswald, A, 1969 'London clay tobacco pipes' *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 3rd series, Vol 32, 171-227

Higgins, D A & Davey, P J, 2004, 'Appendix 4: Draft guidelines for using the clay tobacco pipe record sheets' in S D White, *The Dynamics of Regionalisation and Trade: Yorkshire Clay Tobacco Pipes c1600-1800*, The

Archaeology of the Clay Tobacco Pipe, XVIII, British Archaeological Reports (British Series 374), Oxford, 487-490 (567pp)

Mann, J. 1977, *Clay Tobacco Pipes from Excavations in Lincoln 1970-74* Lincolnshire Archaeological Trust Monograph Series Vol. XV-1

Oswald, A, 1975 *Clay Pipes for the Archaeologist* BAR 14, Oxford

Appendix 3: Context Summary List

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
100	Layer	Loose, mid greyish brown sandy silt with frequent gravel. Seals 101	Mixed gravel layer
101	Layer	Firm mid greyish brown sandy silt with very frequent CBM. Seals 102, sealed by 100	Demolition layer
102	Layer	Soft, mid yellowish brown silt, with occasional charcoal flecks. Seals 103, sealed by 101	Made ground
103	Layer	Compact, mid brownish grey sandy silt. Same as 110. Seals 106, sealed by 102	Made ground
104	Layer	Compact, mid yellowish grey sandy silt with occasional small angular stone and charcoal flecks	Made ground
105	Cut	Linear shape in plan, E - W oriented with steep sides and flat base. Cuts 104, contains 106	Construction cut for terrace
106	Fill	Soft, dark grey silt with very occasional charcoal flecks and rounded stones. Contained by 105, sealed by 103	Fill of [105]
107	Cut	Sub-oval shape in plan with steep sides and a rounded base. Cuts 106, contains 108, 109	Cut of pit
108	Fill	Compact mid brownish red sand with very frequent small coarse sand, stones and occasional pebbles. Seals 109, sealed by 100	Upper fill of [107]
109	Fill	Firm mid greyish yellow sandy silt with frequent angular small and medium stones. Sealed by 108	Lower fill of [107]
110	Layer	Soft, light greyish brown silt with occasional shell and charcoal flecks. Same as 103. Sealed by 111	Made ground
111	Layer	Compact, mid greyish brown clayey silt with occasional CBM, fuel ash and small sub angular stones. Sealed by 112, seals 110	Made ground
112	Layer	Soft, light yellowish grey sandy silt with occasional charcoal flecks and small angular stones. Sealed by 113, seals 111	Made ground
113	Layer	Firm mid greyish brown sandy silt with frequent charcoal flecks, occasional shell and CBM. Sealed by 114, seals 112	Made ground
114	Layer	Firm mid greyish brown sandy silt with frequent CBM, charcoal flecks and small patches. Sealed by 115, seals 113	Demolition layer
115	Layer	Firm dark greyish brown sandy silt, with frequent CBM, charcoal and fuel ash flecks and fragments. Seals 114	Demolition layer

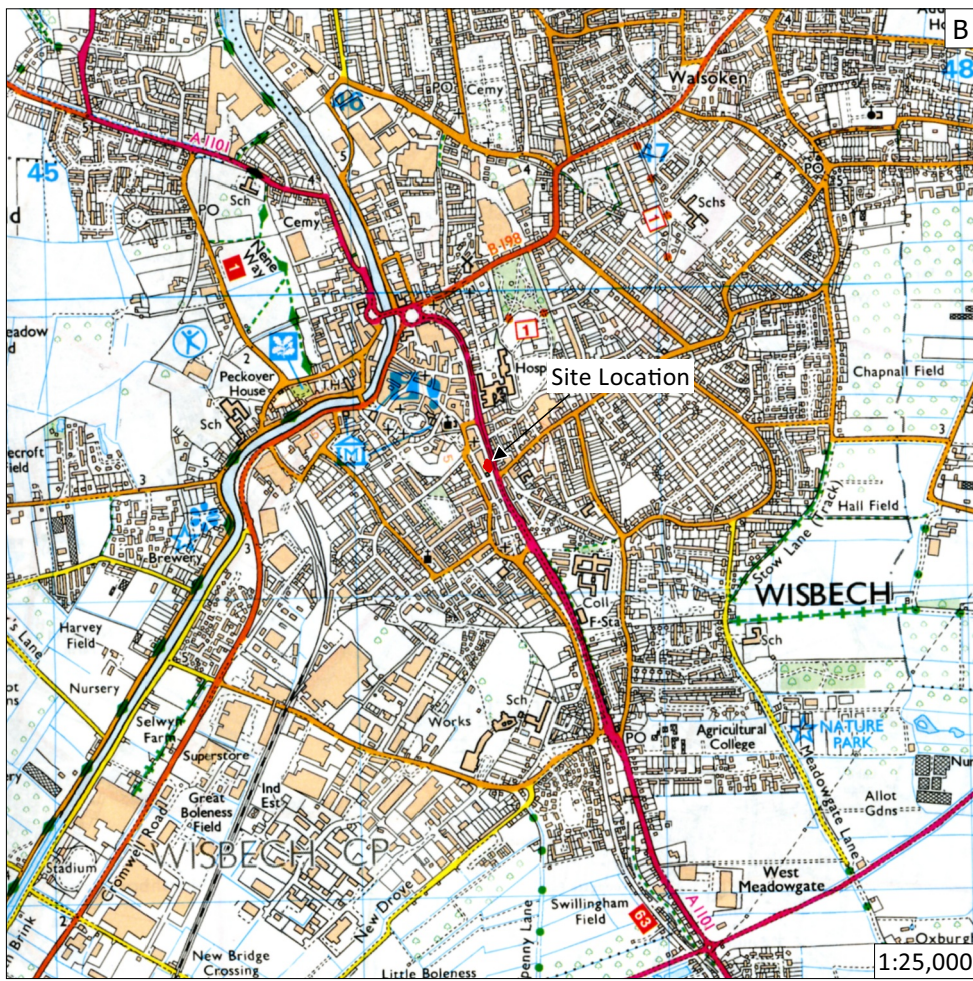
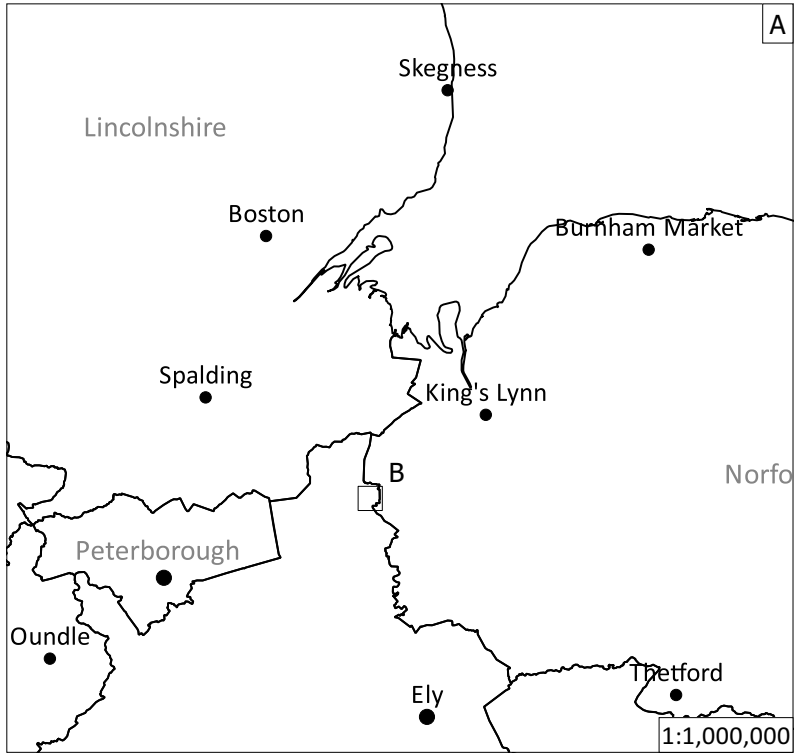
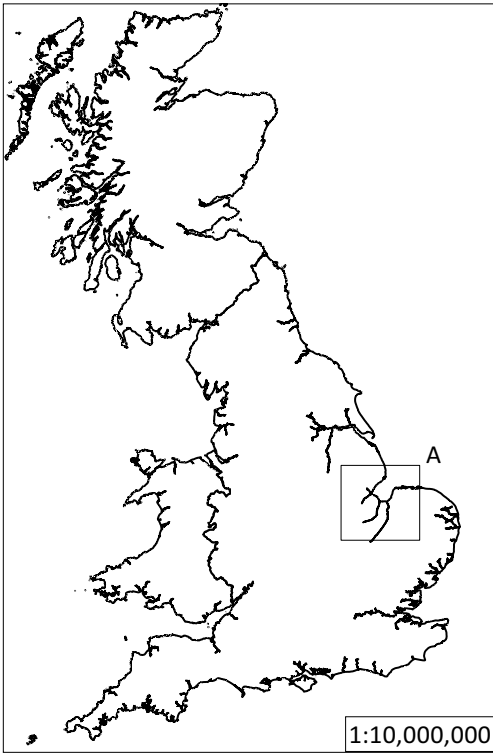


Figure 1: Site location outlined in red

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Site Code	WIOG 14
Scale	10,000,000
	1,000,000
	1:25,000 @ A4
Drawn by	D Connor
Date	10/03/15

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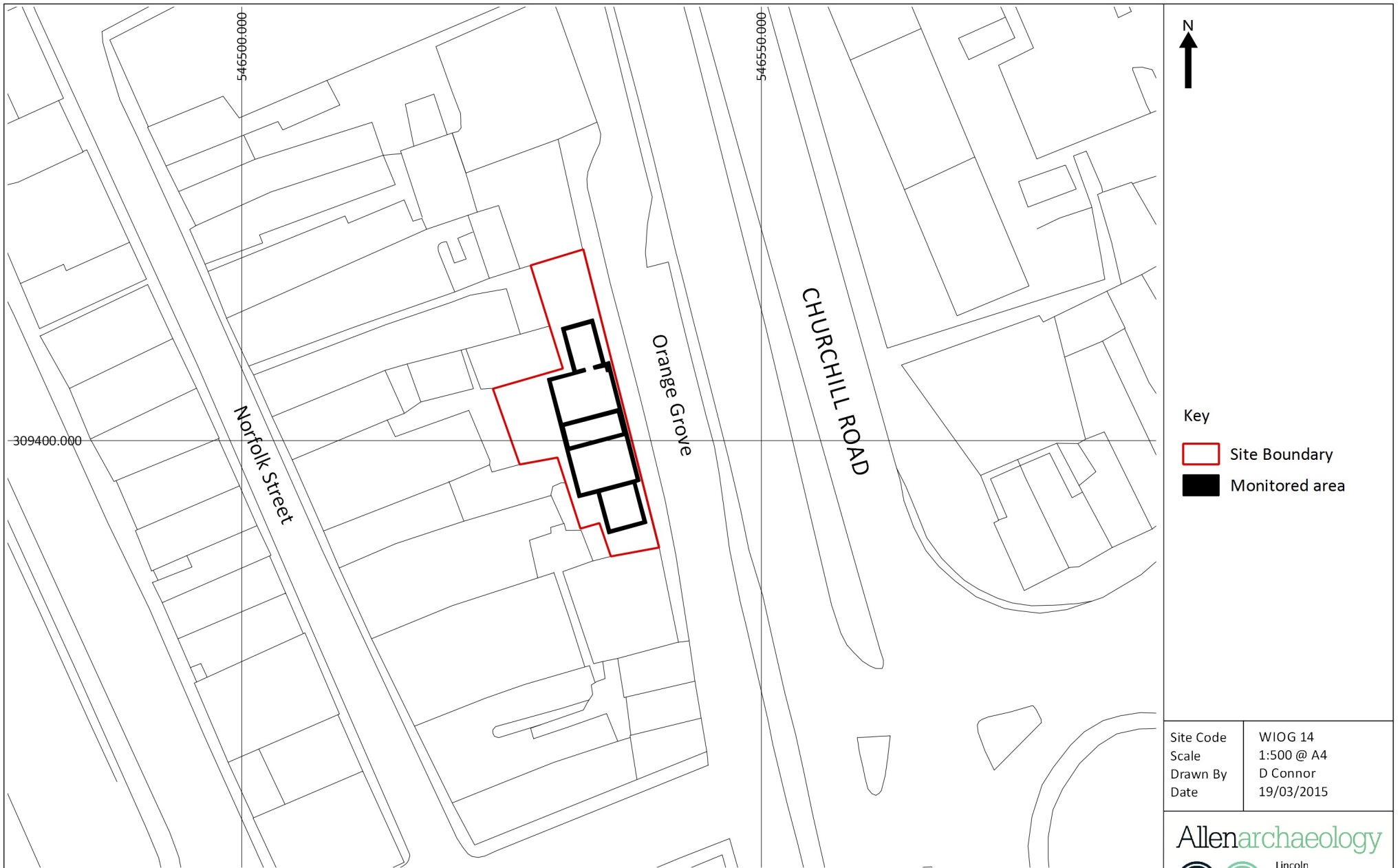


Figure 2: Site location, in red, and showing the area monitored

Site Code	WIOG 14
Scale	1:500 @ A4
Drawn By	D Connor
Date	19/03/2015

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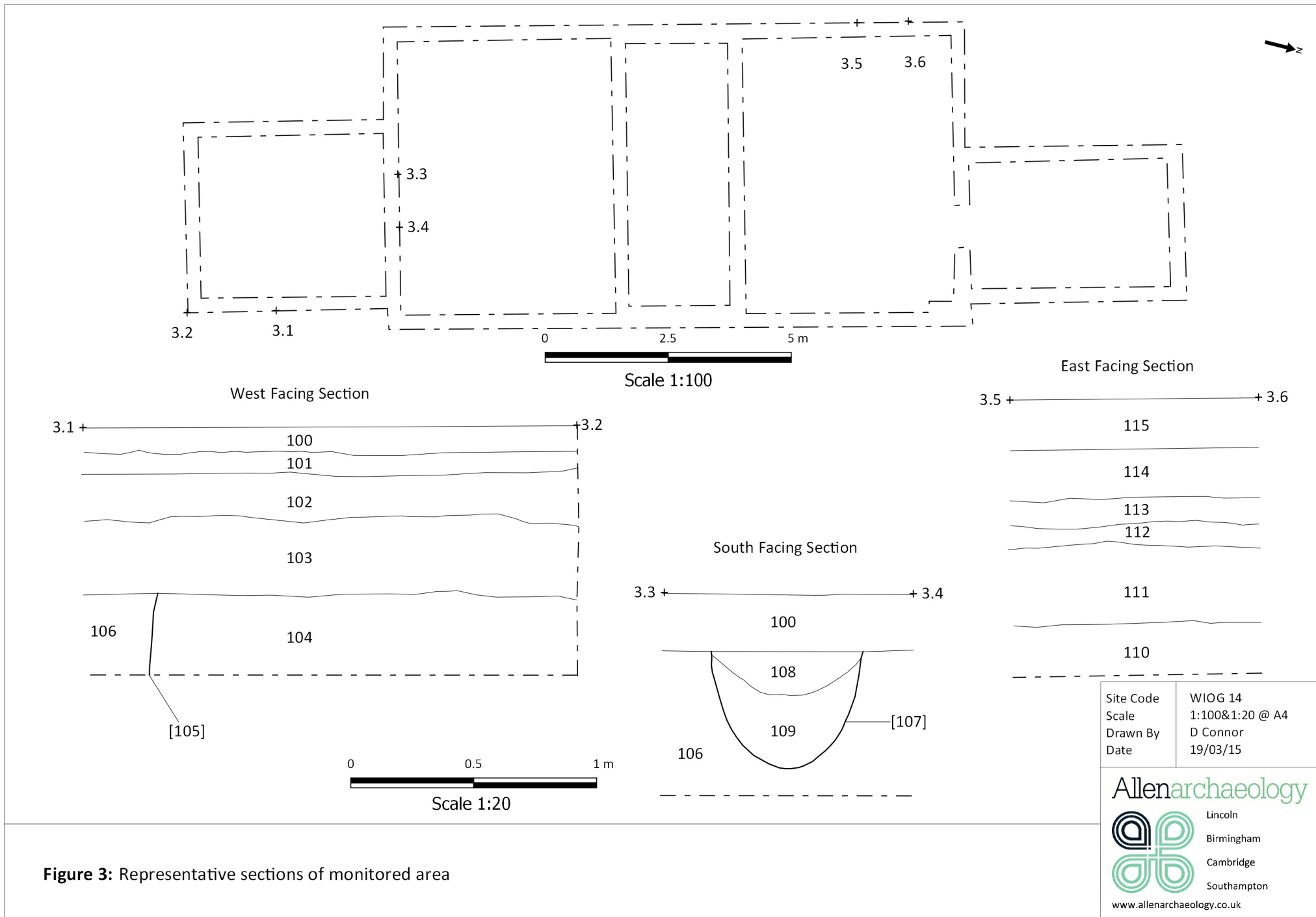


Figure 3: Representative sections of monitored area



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