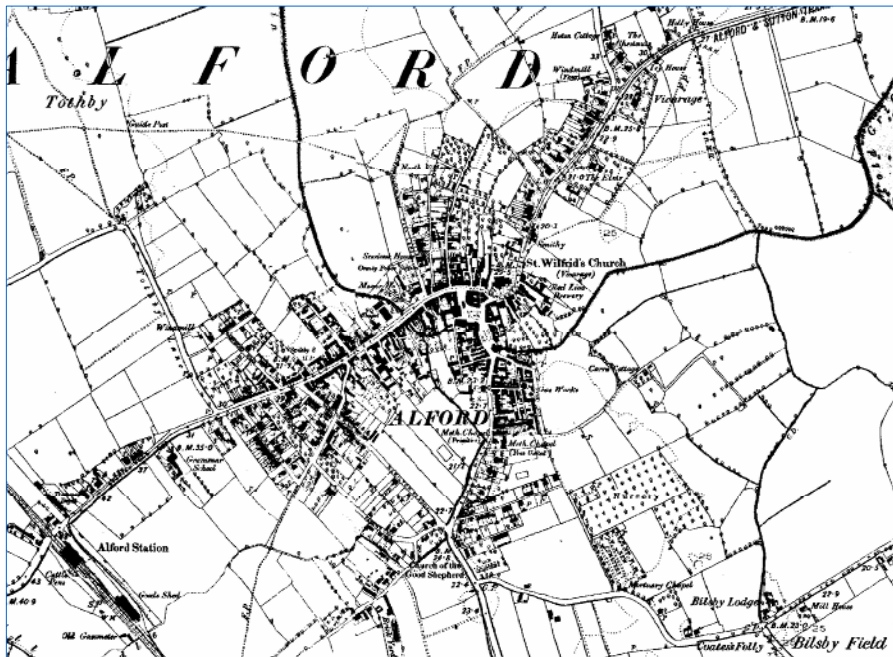


**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT  
DURING CONSTRUCTION OF THREE NEW DWELLINGS AT  
RANTERS ROW, ALFORD, LINCOLNSHIRE**

NGR: TF 45613 75851



Report prepared for  
W P Builder and Son

by Mark Allen

July 2006

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## Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the groundworks for three new dwellings at Ranters Row, Alford, Lincolnshire.

The site lies on the edge of the post-medieval core of Alford, in an area where it was deemed likely that medieval or post-medieval deposits may be encountered.

No archaeologically significant deposits were encountered during the watching brief.



**Fig. 1:** Site location in red at scale 1:25,000

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Allen Archaeological Associates was commissioned by W P Coffey & Son Builders to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks for the construction of three new dwellings at Ranters Row in Alford, Lincolnshire.
- 1.2 The site monitoring, recording and reporting conforms to current national guidelines, as set out in the Institute for Field Archaeologists 'Standards and guidance for archaeological watching briefs' (IFA 1999), and a specification prepared by this company (Allen 2006).
- 1.3 The archive will be submitted to 'The Collection' Museum in Lincoln. The Accession Number for the archive is 2006.155.

## **2.0 Site location and description**

- 2.1 Alford is situated in the administrative district of East Lindsey, approximately 16.8km southeast of the centre of Louth, and c.10km west of the modern coastline. Ranters Row lies towards the eastern side of the town, between South Street to the west and an unnamed track to the east. The development lies at the eastern end of Ranters Row.
- 2.2 The site centres on NGR TF 45613 75851, and lies at an OD height of approximately 7.5m.
- 2.3 The local geology consists of drift Glaciofluvial deposits of sand and gravel, overlying a solid geology of Cretaceous Ferriby Chalk formation (British Geological Survey 1996).

## **3.0 Planning background**

- 3.1 Full planning permission was granted for the construction of three new dwellings. The permission was granted subject to the undertaking of an archaeological watching brief on all associated groundworks (planning ref. N/003/01908/04).

## **4.0 Archaeological and historical background**

- 4.1 Prehistoric activity in Alford is represented by the chance discovery of a number of items. The Neolithic period included a polished stone axe that was discovered close to the beck within the grounds of Alford House, a second stone axe from a field to the north of Caroline Street, and a leaf-shaped flint arrowhead. A bronze age 'battle axe' was found in the vicinity of a mound (now no longer visible) that may have been a funerary monument, southeast of the site, and an 'axe-hammer' of early Bronze Age date was found c.400m to the east.
- 4.2 Several findspots of coins indicate possible Roman activity in the area. These were all discovered to the west of the development area, and include a denarius of Trajan (AD 98 – 117), a rare bronze coin of the usurper Constantine III (AD 406 – 411), and three unidentified Roman coins.
- 4.3 The town is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086, suggesting a pre-medieval origin. The original place-name '*Aldford*' comes from the Old Anglo-Saxon *ald* and the Old English *ford*, meaning old ford. At the time of the survey there were two major

landowners; Gilbert of Ghent and William Tallboys (Morgan and Thorn 1986). A single cruciform brooch of Anglo-Saxon date was found within the village.

- 4.4 During the medieval period, in 1283, the town was granted the rights to hold a fair and market.
- 4.5 Some archaeological investigations have taken place in the town, including a desktop study (Tann 1996) and trial trenching west of the Anchor Inn (McDaid and Field 1997). The trial trenching exposed the remains of a pond, a yard and a building, all of post-medieval date.

## **5.0 Methodology**

- 5.1 Prior to the undertaking of the groundworks, the site was cleared of vegetation. The subsequent groundworks for Plot 3 were monitored by the author on Thursday 20th June 2006. The foundation trenches were excavated by JCB with a toothed bucket to a width of 0.9m and a maximum depth of 1m below the modern ground surface. Following discussions with the Built Environment Officer for Lincolnshire County Council it was decided that Plots 1 and 2 would not require any further monitoring due to the lack of archaeological deposits of any significance being exposed in the Plot 3 excavations.
- 5.2 During excavation, all exposed plan and section surfaces were examined and periodically cleaned in order to determine the stratigraphic sequence. A sample section of the stratigraphy was drawn at a scale of 1:20 and located on a base plan. Context information was recorded for each individual deposit on context record sheets
- 5.3 A photographic record was maintained throughout the watching brief, including general site shots and photographs of the sequence of deposits with appropriate scales.

## **6.0 Results**

- 6.1 The uppermost deposit exposed, 01, was a compact grey clayey silt, measuring some 0.2m in depth. The deposit contained frequent large fragments of modern brick and tile, some small to medium sized stones and several pieces of modern pottery, which were not retained. This deposit was interpreted as a modern deposit containing demolition material associated with previous structures that may have existed on the site. It sealed a c.0.25m – 0.4m deep layer of orange silt with occasional flints, 03, that was identified as a former soil. This overlay a pink/orange clayey coarse silt, 04, that represented the natural glaciofluvial drift geology.
- 6.2 Several modern features were noted during the groundworks for Plot 3 (see figure 3). A modern brick garden wall was exposed, forming the western boundary of the site, 02. Running perpendicular to this boundary, at the southern end of the plot, was a ceramic sewage pipe. Adjacent to this was a single width modern brick wall following a similar alignment to both the garden wall and the sewage pipe. The brick wall formed three sides to a small structure, possibly a garage, of modern construction.

## **7.0 Discussion and conclusion**

7.1 The deposits exposed were of limited archaeological significance. The uppermost deposits may relate to the construction and demolition of buildings depicted on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map of Alford, dated 1891 (Figure 4). These deposits overlay a former soil that may indicate that the site was open ground prior to the previous development.

## **8.0 Effectiveness of methodology**

8.1 The watching brief methodology was appropriate to the scale and nature of the development. It showed that the development has had a negligible impact on the archaeological resource.

## **9.0 Acknowledgements**

9.1 Allen Archaeological Associates would like to thank W F Coffey & Son Builders for this commission.

## **10.0 References**

- Allen M., 2006, *Specification for an archaeological watching brief: Ranters Row, Alford, Lincolnshire*, Allen Archaeological Associates
- British Geological Survey, 1996, *England and Wales 1:50,000 Provisional Series, Solid and Drift Edition. Sheet 104: Mablethorpe*, British Geological Survey, Keyworth.
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- McDaid, M. and Field, N., 1997, *Land beside the Anchor Inn, Church Street, Alford: Archaeological evaluation*. Lindsey Archaeological Services Report No. 218.
- Morgan, P. and Thorn, C., 1986, *The Domesday Book: Lincolnshire*. A Survey of the Counties of England. Phillimore & Co. Ltd
- Tann, G., 1996, *Archaeological desk-based assessment of land beside the Anchor Inn, Church Street, Alford*. Lindsey Archaeological Services Report No. 208.

## **11.0 Site archive**

11.1 The documentary archive is currently in the possession of Allen Archaeological Associates. It will be deposited at 'The Collection Museum' in Lincoln within six months.

## Appendix 1: Colour Plates



**Plate 1:** General view of the development area taken from junction between Ranters Row and track at southeast corner of site, looking northwest



**Plate 2:** Garden wall 02 exposed along north side of Plot 3 excavations, looking northeast.



**Plate 3:** Plot 3 under excavation. Taken from southwest corner of plot, looking northeast.

**Appendix 2: List of archaeological contexts**

<b>Context</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
01	Layer	Grey clayey silt with frequent modern brick and tile	Modern demolition
02	Wall	6 courses of modern brick bonded with cement	Garden boundary wall
03	Layer	Mid orange silt with occasional flints	Possible buried soil
04	Layer	Pink/orange clayey coarse silt	Glaciofluvial drift geology



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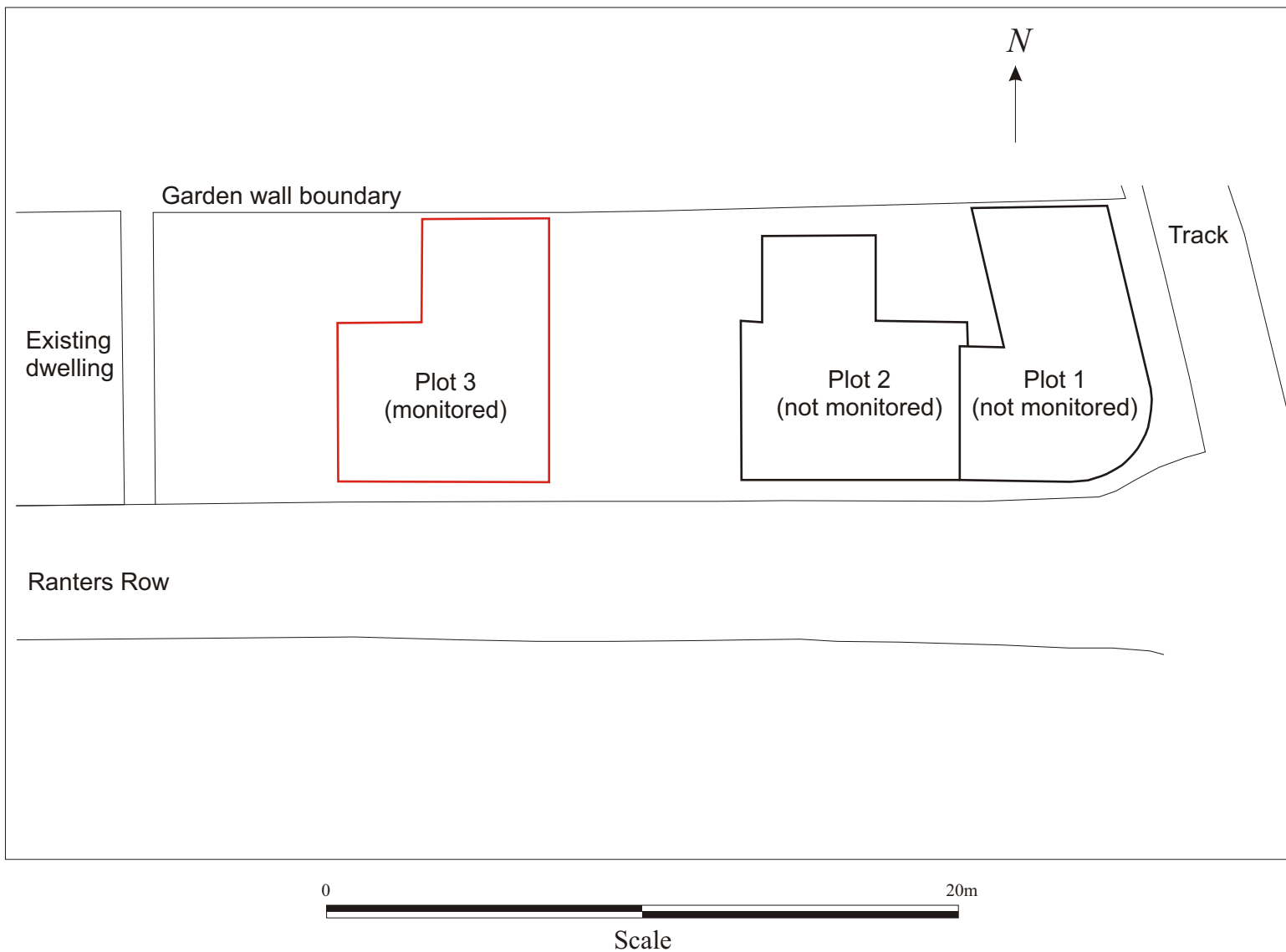


Figure 2: Location of house plot excavations at scale 1:200. Monitored plot outlined in red.

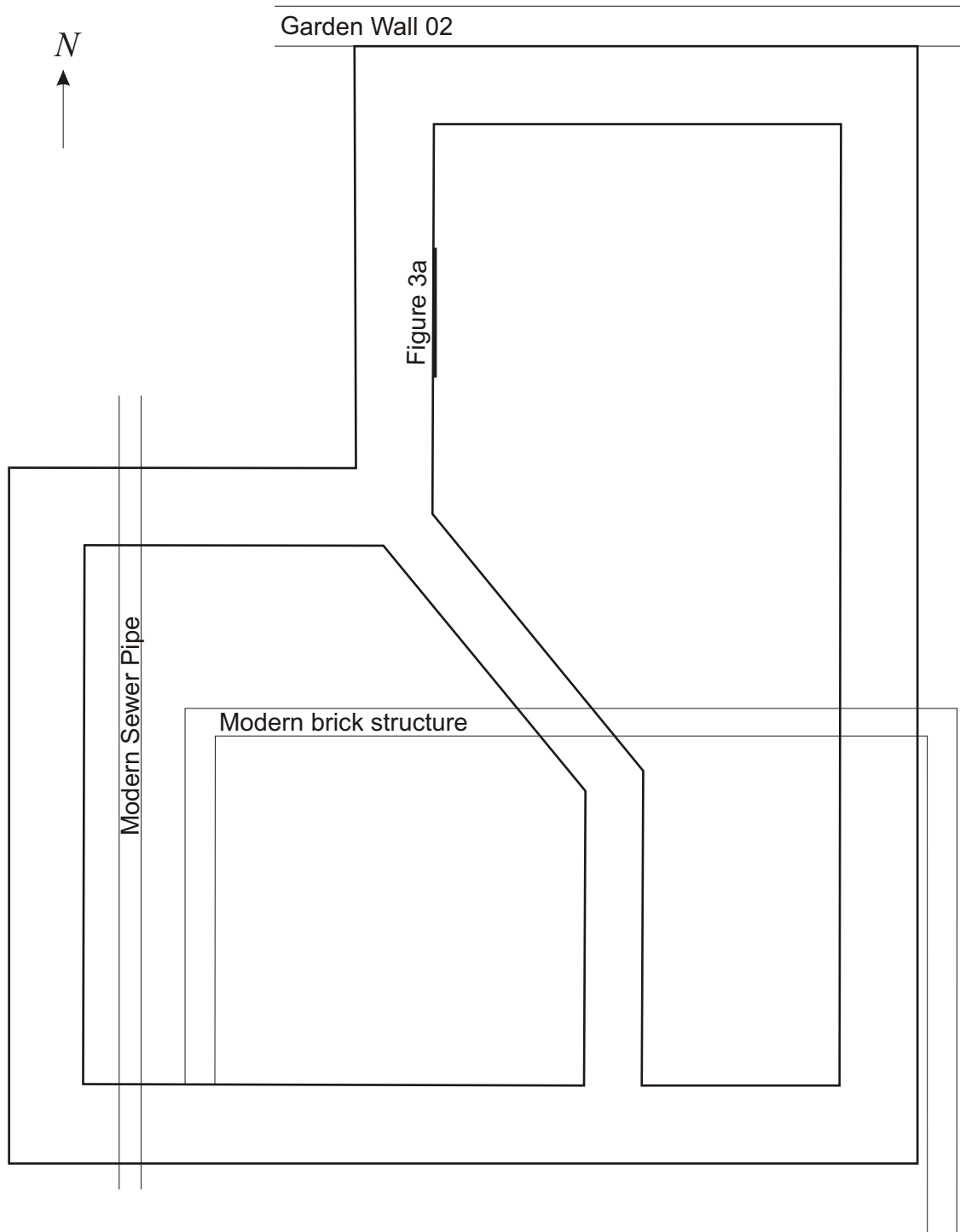


Figure 3: House Plot 3 Foundations at scale 1:50

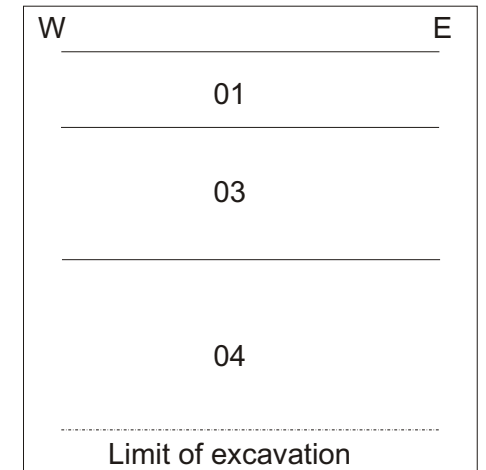


Figure 3a: Representative section of deposits at scale 1:20



Figure 4: First edition Ordnance Survey map of 1891 showing location of site outlined in red. Not to scale.