

Summary

- An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the groundworks for a new dwelling at Poppy House, Hollowgate Hill, Willoughton, Lincolnshire.
- The site lies within an area of high archaeological potential, with finds of prehistoric to Roman date having been recovered in the area. The village was also the site of a Knight's Templar preceptory and a Benedictine grange by the 12th century.
- A single undated ditch was identified running across the development area.

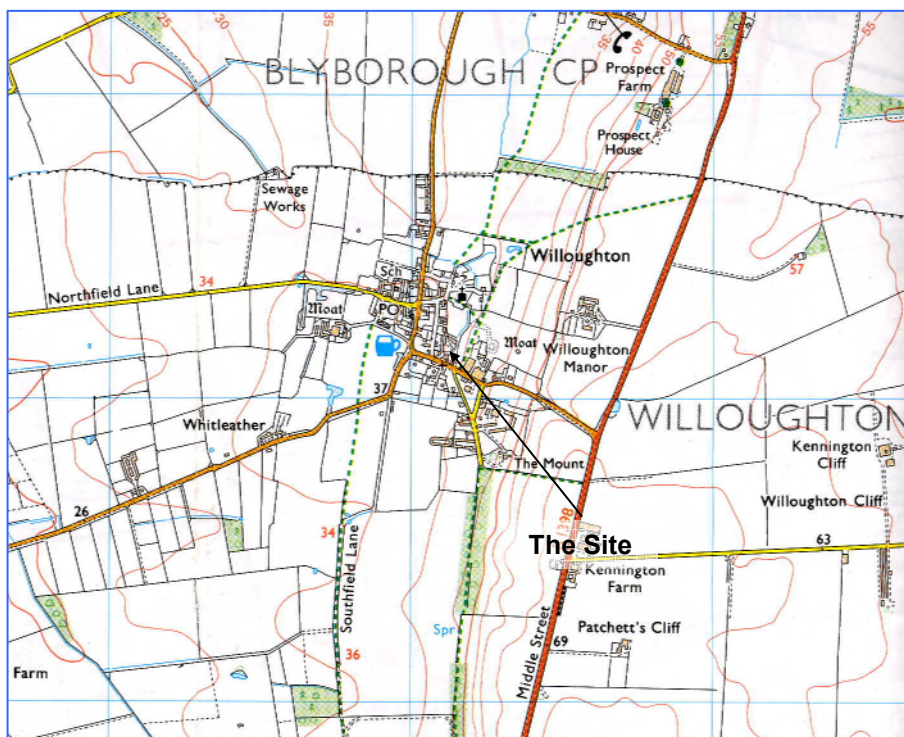


Figure 1: Site location at scale 1:25,000

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Allen Archaeological Associates was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Panton to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks for a new dwelling on land at Poppy House, Hollowgate Hill, Willoughton, 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), the local guidelines set out in the *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: A Manual of Archaeological Practice* (LCC 1998), and a specification prepared by this company (Clay 2007).
- 1.3 The archive will be submitted to The Collection, Lincoln, within six months of completion of the project, and will be accessible under the LCC Museum Accession Number 2007.85.

2.0 Site location and description

- 2.1 Willoughton is in the administrative district of West Lindsey, approximately 23km north-north-west of the centre of Lincoln. The proposed development area is a plot of land to the north of Hollowgate Hill and to the east of Middle Street, with Poppy House at the north side of the plot. The site centres on NGR SK 9312 9316.
- 2.2 The site lies at the foot of the limestone escarpment of the Lincolnshire Edge, at a height of approximately 35m above Ordnance Datum. The underlying solid geology is Marlstone Rock, with no drift geology recorded (British Geological Survey 1982).

3.0 Planning background

- 3.1 Full planning permission was granted for the construction of a new dwelling with associated garage and services, and an access from Hollowgate Hill (Planning Reference M04/P/0063). The permission was granted subject to an archaeological watching brief on all associated groundworks by a suitably competent archaeologist.

4.0 Archaeological and historical background

- 4.1 In 1932, a Mesolithic site was investigated on the scarp slope to the north-east of the village. The site comprised an occupation horizon with a number of flint scatters and hearths, and charcoal and burnt bone (May 1976). Iron Age settlement evidence, in the form of flint, glass beads and pottery has also been found on the scarp slope, to the south of the village (Archaeology Data Service Ref. NMR_NATINV-327123). A prehistoric routeway ran along the edge of the scarp, broadly following the modern line of Middle Street (B1398).
- 4.2 Willoughton is one of a series of small villages located along the spring line at the base of the Limestone escarpment. The Roman road Ermine Street ran along the top of this escarpment, some 3km to the east of the village, and was the focus of settlement activity at this time. A small scatter of pottery has been recovered from the scarp slope to the south-east of the village (Archaeology Data Service Ref. NMR_NATINV-327120).
- 4.3 Settlement is believed to have shifted downslope to the spring line in the subsequent Anglo-Saxon period. A number of findspots of Anglo-Saxon (6th – 8th century) material are recorded from around Willoughton, principally towards the south and east of the modern village (Archaeology Data Service Ref. NMR_NATINV-327099). The place name also suggests that

the modern settlement originated in the Anglo-Saxon period. It is derived from the Old English elements *wilig-* and *-tun*, meaning ‘the farmstead/village where willows grow’ (Cameron 1998).

- 4.4 In the Domesday Book, Willoughton is divided between two landowners, Waldin the Artificer and Odo the Crossbowmen (Morgan and Thorne 1986). Early in the 12th century, the village became the site of a major preceptory, an agricultural estate of the Knight’s Templar. The extensive earthworks of this estate are visible to the west of the site, on the west side of Templefield Road. The Willoughton preceptory became the richest such establishment in England, until the abolition of the order in 1312, when the estate passed into the hands of the Knights Hospitaller, who controlled the site until the Dissolution in 1540 (Archaeology Data Service Ref. NMR_NATINV-327087).
- 4.5 To the east of the site lie the earthwork remains of a Benedictine grange established in 1148, and suppressed in 1403, comprising a moat, fishponds and water channels (Archaeology Data Service Ref. NMR_NATINV-327096).

5.0 Methodology

- 5.1 Machine excavation of the foundation trenches was carried out using a JCB 3CX excavator fitted with a 0.6m wide toothed bucket. The footings were excavated to a depth of approximately 1m below the existing ground surface.
- 5.2 During excavation, all exposed plan and section surfaces were examined and periodically cleaned, in order to determine the stratigraphic sequence. Context information was recorded for each individual deposit on context record sheets. A photographic record was maintained throughout the watching brief, including general site shots and photographs of the sequence of deposits with appropriate scales and a north arrow. The groundworks were monitored by Phil Chavasse on April 11th and Chris Clay on September 10th 2007.

6.0 Results

- 6.1 The stratigraphic sequence comprised a 0.2 to 0.3m deep brown/grey topsoil deposit, 01, overlying a 0.45m deep brown/grey clayey silt subsoil, 02. This deposit contained a single sherd of 18th Brown Glazed Earthenware a 19th century doll’s teapot lid and a clay tobacco pipe bowl of 18th/19th century date. The underlying natural, 05, was a limestone brash comprising sub-angular limestone chunks in an orange/brown clayey silt matrix.
- 6.2 A single linear feature was identified, ditch 03, running across the northern part of the house plot. The feature was curvilinear, running on a broadly north-east to south-west alignment. It was 2m wide by 0.65m deep, and was filled by an orange/brown clayey silt with occasional charcoal flecks, and frequent limestone fragments, 04. No dating evidence was recovered.

7.0 Discussion and conclusion

- 7.1 The watching brief identified a single curvilinear feature running across the site. The lack of dating evidence from the ditch makes it of limited significance, but its depth in the stratigraphic sequence suggests it is unlikely to be modern. This view is further strengthened by the orientation of the ditch, as it does not follow any existing boundaries on or around the site.

8.0 Effectiveness of methodology

- 8.1 The watching brief methodology was appropriate to the scale and nature of the development. It demonstrated that the development has impacted on few deposits of archaeological significance.

9.0 Acknowledgements

- 9.1 Allen Archaeological Associates would like to thank Mr and Mrs Panton for this commission, and Mr Terence Underwood for his cooperation and assistance during the fieldwork.

10.0 References

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- May J., 1976, *Prehistoric Lincolnshire*, History of Lincolnshire I, History of Lincolnshire Committee, Lincoln.
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11.0 Site archive

- 11.1 The documentary archive is currently in the possession of Allen Archaeological Associates. It will be submitted to The Collection, Lincoln within six months, where it will be stored under the accession number 2007.85.

Appendix 1: Colour Plates



Plate 1: View of the house plot footings, looking north-east.



Plate 2: Slot through ditch 03, looking north-north-east



Plate 3: Garage plot excavations, looking north-north-east.

Appendix 2: Pottery report**By Jane Young**

context	cname	full name	form type	sherds	weight	decoration	part	date
002	ENG5	Unspecified English Stoneware	doll's teapot lid	1	6	pink painted line	complete	19 th century
002	BERTH	Brown glazed earthenware	large jar	1	47	BS	int & ext glaze	18 th century

Appendix 3: List of archaeological contexts

Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation
01	Layer	Brown/grey clayey silt, occasional charcoal flecks	Topsoil
02	Layer	Brown/grey clayey silt, occasional limestone fragments	Subsoil
03	Cut	Curvilinear ditch cut, contains 04	Drainage/boundary feature, date unknown
04	Fill	Orange/brown clayey silt, occasional charcoal fragments and frequent limestone pieces	Natural silting of ditch 03
05	Layer	Sub-angular limestone in orange/brown clayey silt matrix	Natural limestone brash