

**LAND TO THE NORTH OF COMPOSITION LANE,
WINTERINGHAM, NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL 'STRIP, MAP AND SAMPLE' FIELDWORK
IN ADVANCE OF MINERALS EXTRACTION**

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Report prepared for

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Summary

An archaeological strip/map/sample exercise was conducted during stripping of topsoil in advance of sand and gravel extraction on a site to the north of Composition Lane, Winterringham, North Lincolnshire.

A single Mesolithic or Early Neolithic flint artefact was found and evidence of Iron Age and Roman activity was identified.

Very little dating evidence was recovered and it has not been possible to separate Iron Age and Roman features. Two different field systems or enclosure ditch alignments were recorded, as had been previously indicated by a geophysical survey and evaluation.

A series of parallel ditches crossing the site appear to be respected by one of the field systems. The ditches are sited at the change of slope, with lower ground to the north containing no identified evidence for enclosures. Although the parallel ditches have the appearance of flanking ditches beside a trackway, a gully crossed the intervening space at one phase, and there is a possibility that the multiple ditches formed a boundary rather than marking a trackway.

Following Roman activity on the site, the land became one of Winterringham's open fields, and the evaluation identified ridge and furrow on a single alignment.

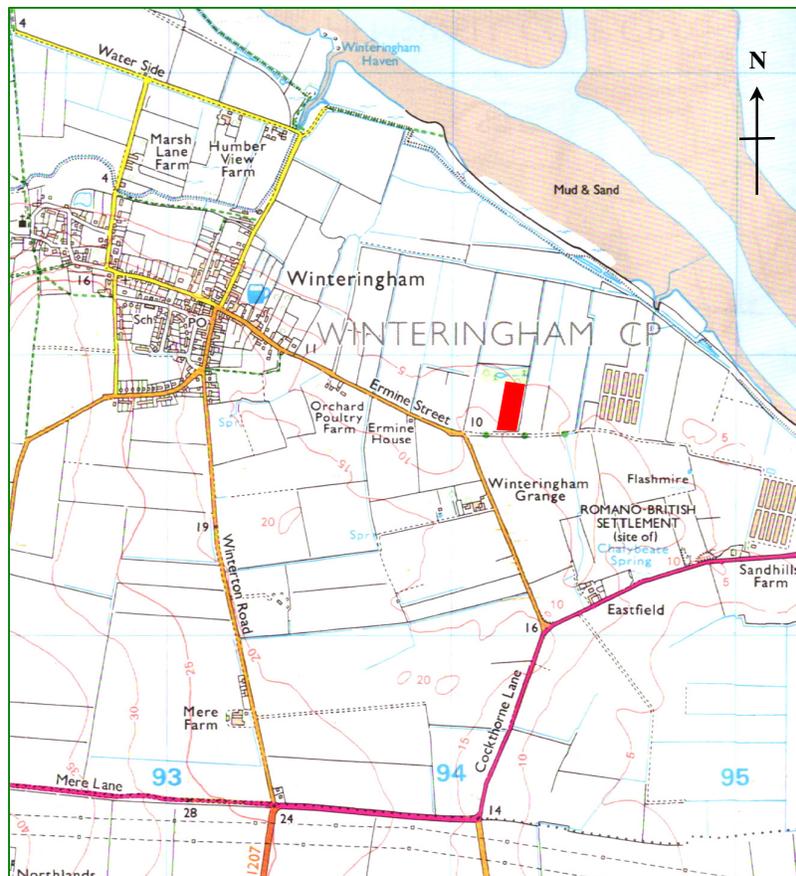


Figure 1: Location plan of the site at scale 1:25,000: the site is marked in red. (© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. PCA licence no. 100049278.)

1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd (PCAS) were commissioned by A.F. Dowson and Son in February 2009 to undertake an archaeological strip, map and sample exercise during topsoil stripping of land to the north of Composition Lane, Winteringham, North Lincs. The archaeological monitoring and recording followed current best practice and appropriate national guidance including:

- Code of Conduct (Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1994 as revised);
- Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (Institute of Field Archaeologists, 2008).

The strip, map and sample exercise took place between July 22nd and September 4th 2009, under the direction of Simon Savage and Jeremy Mordue.

Copies of this report will be deposited with the commissioning client and the North Lincolnshire SMR Officer. A short text will be submitted to the editor of the county journal, Lincolnshire History and Archaeology. Reports will also be deposited with the North Lincolnshire Museum along with an ordered project archive for long-term storage and curation (Accn code: WGMCY).

2.0 Site location and description (fig. 1)

The site is within the parish of Winteringham, in the administrative district of North Lincolnshire, c.11km north-east of Scunthorpe and 700m east of the village of Winteringham. It lies immediately north of the metalled track, Composition Lane, 150m east of its junction with the minor lane to Winteringham village known as Ermine Street. The site is centred on NGR: SE 9420 2182.

The site, approximately 1.1 hectares in area, was formerly under cultivation. Immediately north of the site is a small wood surrounding a pond. The eastern side of the site is flanked by a narrow strip of scrub with a farm track beyond. The south side is bordered by a hedgerow that flanks Composition Lane. There is no physical boundary to the west and the land beyond the site forms part of the same arable field as that occupied by the site itself.

3.0 Topography and geology

The site lies at the mouth of the Ancholme Vale within a low lying and undulating agricultural landscape, close to the foreshore of the Humber Estuary at the foot of the Limestone Escarpment to the west. It is 0.7km south-west of South Channel, which forms part of the Humber Estuary, with Read's Island to the north, and 1.3km south-east of the outflow of Haven Drain, which forms a small inlet at Winteringham Haven.

The site slopes gently down from a maximum height of 9.48m OD at its southern side to a low point of 4.99m OD near to its north-east corner. It occupies a high point in the immediate landscape, with the land beyond sloping down to the north, east, and less markedly to the south-east (Pls. 1 and 2). To the south-west and west the land is mostly level adjacent to the site, but rises slightly further to the south-west. The site's location provides panoramic views over the Humber Estuary to the north-east.

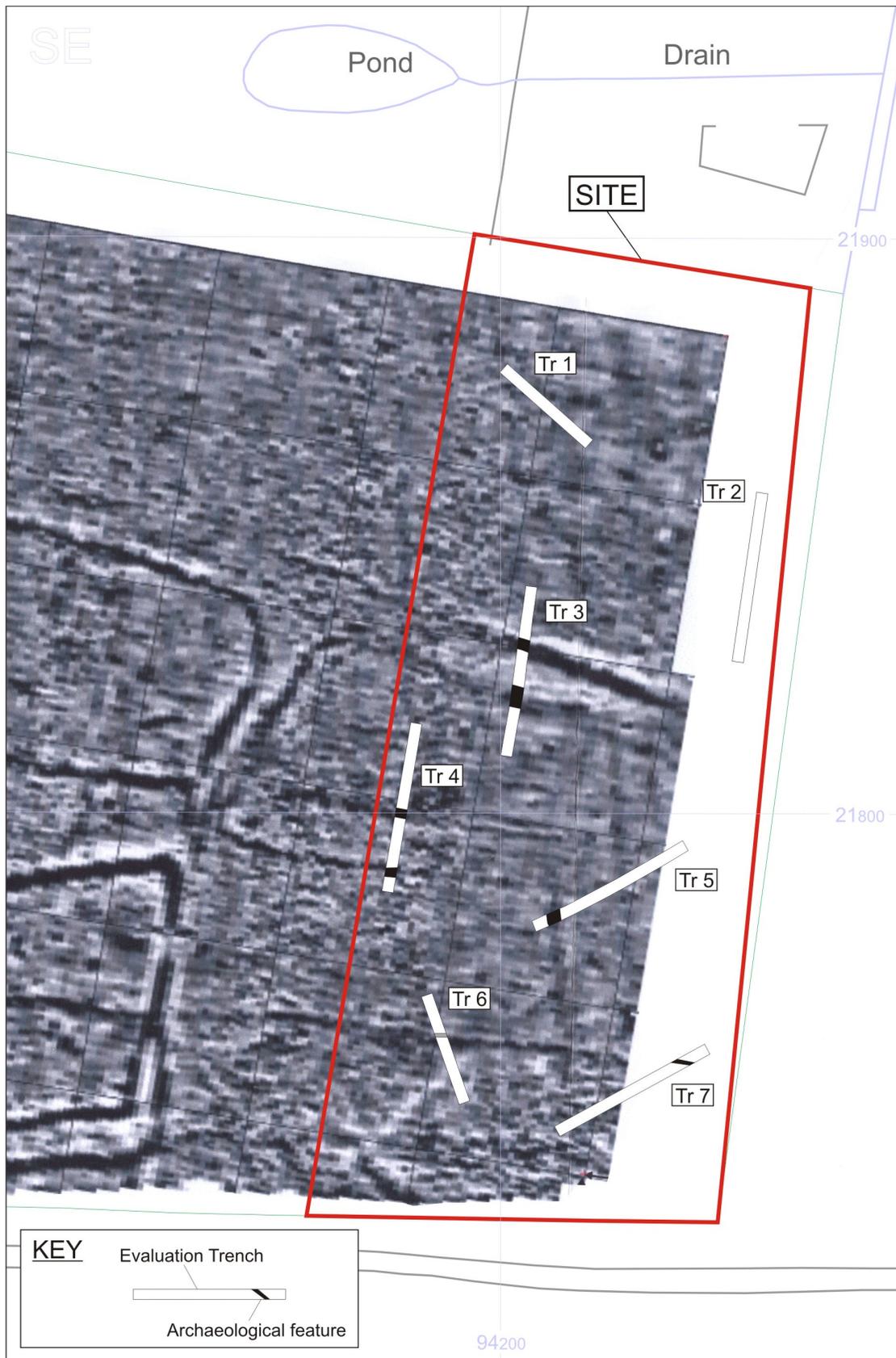


Figure 2: Location of the stripped area at scale 1:100, showing the positions of features from the evaluation trenches based on the geophysical survey plot. (© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. PCAS Licence No. 100049278).

The drift geology of the area is mapped as glacial sand and gravel, described as fine to medium blown sands (Aram 1993). The underlying solid geology, limestone, belongs to the Hibaldstow Formation of the Jurassic era (BGS, 1983).

4.0 Planning background

The strip, map and sample exercise methodology was detailed in a project specification produced by PCAS in February 2009 and approved by the NLSMR Officer. It follows on from the completion of previous archaeological work on this site, including an archaeological desk-based assessment, geophysical survey and an archaeological evaluation (Gardner 2006; Bunn 2007; Rowe 2008). It constitutes the final phase of the mitigation strategy undertaken to satisfy a planning condition for the extraction of minerals from the site (planning ref. 2009/0321).

5.0 Archaeological and historical background

The parish of Winteringham lies at the northern section of the Roman road Ermine Street, where it reached the River Humber. The mid-later Anglo-Saxon and modern Winteringham village developed about 1.5km west of the road.

The essentially straight Roman route from Lincoln deflects alongside the A1077 Cockthorne Lane towards the north-east, terminating about 350m south of the modern foreshore. The road forks within a c. 30ha area of cropmark features where archaeological remains of a late Iron Age and 3rd/4th century AD Roman settlement have been recorded. Parts of this complex were excavated in 1964-5, under the direction of Ian Stead. Humberside Archaeology Unit conducted further work in 1981-2, in advance of mineral extraction at Sandhills Farm. Human burials have been recovered from the margins around the settlement areas, to the south of Sandhills Farm, and immediately to the west of Eastfield Farm. One fork of the road passed to the south of Flashmire, on a south-west/north-east alignment, with the other turning to a north-north-west alignment about 400m east of Winteringham Grange. The course of that road has not been traced through the settlement. Evidence for Romano British occupation on the foreshore of the Humber has been revealed by archaeological evaluation at the nearby sewage works.

The area monitored in 2009 is situated to the north-west of the identified main area of Roman occupation, within about 100m of the presumed shoreline. Air photographs show a linear cropmark of a north-west/south-east aligned trackway, and other features, within the field to the south of a small plantation (NMR AP ref. SE 9421/123-125, DNR 1032/1-3, 28/6/1978).

The cropmark in the next field to the west has been removed by quarrying. An archaeological evaluation in that field found the eastern edge of the sand quarry but no surviving archaeological features (Johnson and Munford 2006). Aerial photographic evidence shows that quarrying within that site began in the 1940s, and that the quarry expanded rapidly, but was worked out, back-filled and reclaimed as agricultural land by the early 1960s.

The 2007 geophysical survey (fig. 2) of the present site identified an east-west oriented trackway flanked by ditches, which ran across the entire field. A narrower offshoot on the south side led to a well-defined partially double ditched enclosure with internal features and an access on the east side, which was located on the south side of the field approximately 30m to the west of the present extraction site. Less defined enclosures may occupy the area to the north and north-west of the double-

ditched example, between it and the east-west trackway. Two parallel linear anomalies to the west of the enclosures may represent a former alignment or offshoot of Ermine Street, while further faint anomalies are present within the area to the east of the enclosures.

The evaluation carried out on this site in 2008 demonstrated that the most significant archaeological remains were of Late Iron Age – early Romano-British date, and consisted of five ditches of varying depths. The remains of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation were also recorded. Few artefacts were recovered during the evaluation and the environmental samples taken proved uninformative (Rowe 2008).

6.0 The Strip, Map and Sample

6.1 Scope of Works

The mitigation strategy proposed that

- All structures and all zones of specialised activity (eg industrial, agricultural processing, ceremonial, funerary) were to be fully or extensively excavated, and all relationships recorded.
- Ditches, gullies and linear features – all significant relationships were to be defined and investigated. All terminals and intersections were to be excavated. Sufficient of the linear features were to be excavated to determine the character of each individual linear feature over its entire course, with consideration given to possible re-cutting of ditches which may not have taken place over the entire length. Should specialised deposits (eg. localised refuse dumping, industrial wastes) be found to be present, then more extensive excavation was required. Sufficient artefact assemblages were to be recovered to assist in dating stratigraphic sequences and for obtaining sufficient ceramic assemblages for comparison with other sites.
- Pits were generally to be half sectioned, with some fully excavated in the light of information gained in half-sectioning, for example if artefact rich. Pits containing significant structural traces or important artefactual or environmental material were also to be fully excavated.
- Post holes and stake holes, where not clearly forming a structure, were to be half sectioned ensuring that relationships were investigated. Those features with a significant artefactual or environmental content were to be fully excavated. Other features such as working hollows or quarry pits were to be investigated to define their extent, date and function. All relationships were to be defined.
- All human burials of any date were to be fully recorded and removed.

The general aims/objectives of the strip, map and sample exercise were to:

- locate and map the archaeological remains present within the site (including the track side ditches and possible enclosure ditches).
- excavate and record a representative sample of these remains.
- undertake the post-excavation assessment and final analysis of the resulting material.

- prepare a report and /or publication on the results of the project.
- produce an ordered archive.

The specific aims were to:

- establish a sequential relationship between the identified features, interpret their function and to provide accurate dating for these features by the recovery of datable material.
- identify the presence of any trackway surfacing material, observed during machining or identifiable within the trackside ditches.
- establish the presence of enclosures formed by some of the identified ditches and to interpret their extent and function.
- compare the results of the fieldwork with the results of the 2007 geophysical survey in order to refine the interpretation of geophysical surveys within the local area generally, and specifically to reconsider the interpretation of the neighbouring enclosure.
- consider the results of the fieldwork with regards to the adjacent enclosure, particularly reviewing dating evidence and possible evidence indicating habitation, industry or any other specialised activity, which might be relevant to any future development in that area.
- consider the site's relationship within the local environment and to the nearby Roman settlement of Old Winteringham and the speculated early military establishment, with consideration of any evidence for a continuation of the Roman Ermine Street
- consider the site's chronology, specifically the periods of use and decline, cross-referenced with the known development of the historical landscape.

6.2 Methodology

The removal of all over-burden was undertaken by 360° excavator fitted with a smooth ditching bucket, working under continuous archaeological direction (PI. 3). In order to facilitate plant access in wet conditions, the northern and western borders of the application area, together with an irregular area in the south-western corner of the site, were not included in the strip (fig. 3): these areas remain within the application area of the existing planning application, and will be incorporated in the next phase of works. Topsoil and subsoil were stripped and stockpiled separately; following the topsoil strip, the surface of the exposed subsoil was examined with a metal-detector. A complete plan was made of all archaeological features and was followed by a site meeting held with the NLSMR Officer to agree levels of further work.

Archaeological features, or suspected archaeological features, were hand-excavated and recorded. A photographic record, both colour and monochrome, was maintained throughout the project, and a selection of photographs are presented with this report (Appendix 1). Context numbers were assigned for recording purposes (Appendix 2).



Figure 3: Plan of archaeological features identified on the stripped area, at scale 1:1000.

6.3 Results (Fig. 3; Appendices 1-9)

6.3.1 Most recent deposits and features

The topsoil layer (001) was a very dark grey sandy silt with occasional stones. The layer varied in depth across the stripped area, ranging between 0.3m and 0.4m.

Four features were directly sealed by the topsoil and are potentially very recent. A 6m long and 0.55m deep irregular hollow [094] at the eastern edge of the field was interpreted as a rabbit warren, but may have been settlement related to feature [096] immediately to its south, which contained the articulated skeleton of an immature cow. The burial probably represents relatively recent disposal of a diseased beast (Appendix 8).

Two 19th century or later features were identified about 40m north of Composition Lane, near the eastern edge of the field. A 5m long, 2m wide irregular feature [037] was not investigated and the post-medieval and modern debris in its upper fill (038) was not collected. A much better defined pit [035] lay about 4m to its west. This was slightly under 3m in diameter and 1.35m deep (Figs. 3 and 4; Pl. 5). The upper fill (036) contained post-medieval pottery and tile, fragments of land drains, and a folded scrap of lead which was not retained (Appendices 6 and 7). It is probable that these disturbances were all related to small-scale sand and gravel extraction.

Beneath the topsoil was a layer of dark brown sandy silt (002). This varied in thickness considerably, being almost non-existent to the south and east, but up to 0.7m thick towards the west and north. It sealed most of the archaeological features on the site and appeared similar to the fill of the plough furrows. This layer has been interpreted as a post-medieval subsoil, derived from material spread from the medieval plough ridges. No dating material was found in this layer. The thicker deposits could indicate where medieval ploughing had raised more material where underlying ground was looser or wetter.

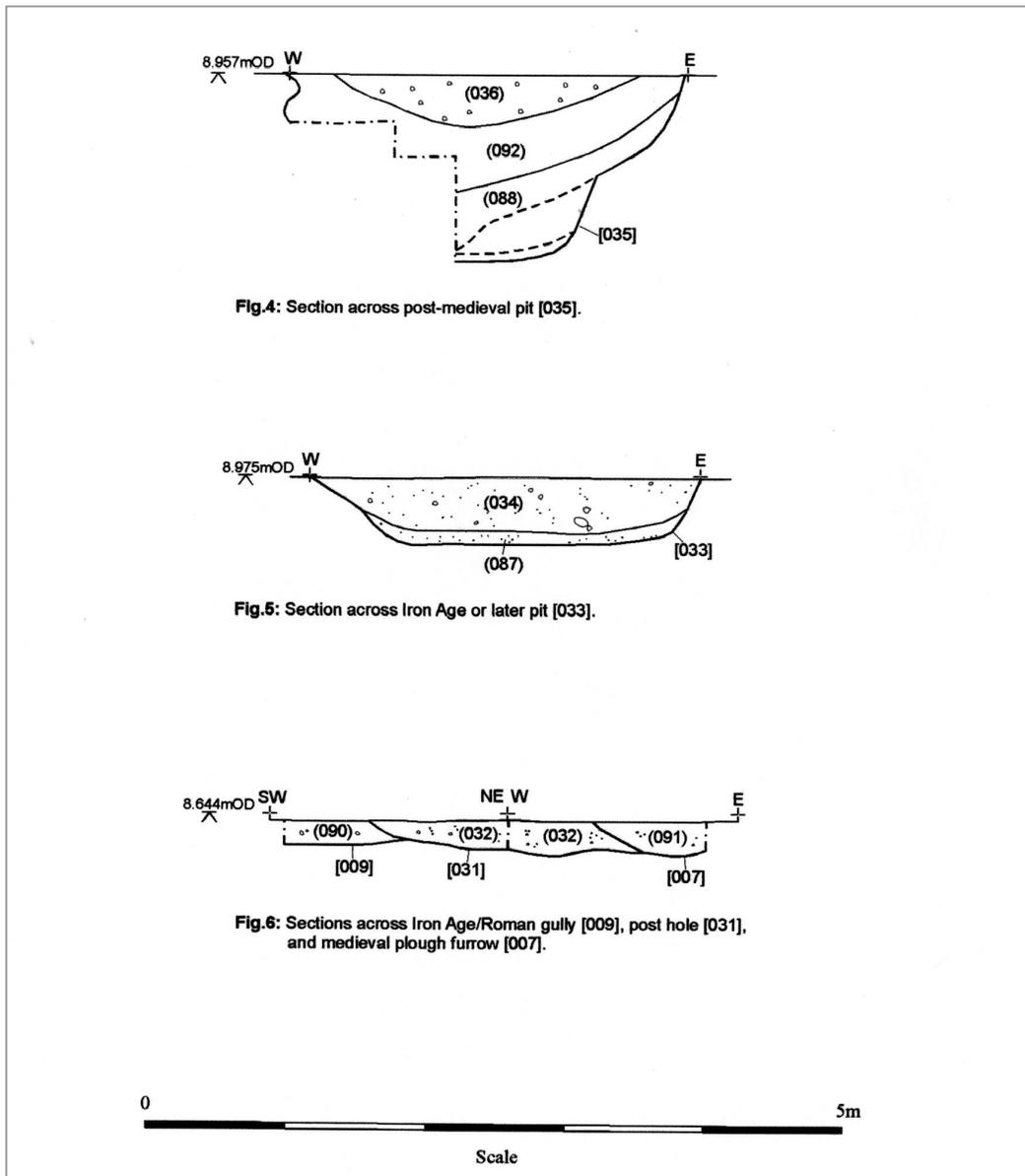
6.3.2 The Plough Furrows

The topsoil stripping and removal of layer (002) revealed parts of six parallel features [025], [027], [075], [077], [007] and [068], which crossed the area on a north-south alignment. Most of these features can be distinguished on the geophysical survey conducted in 2007 (Bunn 2007). They were at spacings of approximately 11m, with widths of between 1.3m and 3m, and depths of up to 0.4m. (For the sake of clarity, only furrows [025] and [027], which did not interact with the earlier archaeology, and furrow [007], in which drawn sections needed to be located, are shown on figure 3.)

These were identified as medieval (or possibly post-medieval) plough furrows. The variation in recorded width and depth is thought partly to reflect variable machining of the subsoil layer (002). A single abraded sherd of Roman pottery was found in furrow [025] (fill 026/043/044), and post-medieval sherds were found within (028/045) [027] and (069), [068].

6.3.3 Pits 033, 039, 041, and Post-hole 031

Three pits sealed by layer (002) were identified within the monitored area. Pit [033], on higher ground near the south-east corner of the area, was about 2.5m diameter and 0.55m deep (Fig. 5; Pl. 6). It had steeply sloping sides and a flat base. A thin primary fill (087), of sandy eroded material, was overlain by (034), a grey/brown fill with infrequent charcoal flecks. Fill (034) contained a single rim sherd from an Iron Age pot (Appendix 5).



Pit [041] was near the western edge of the site, about 80m to the north. This was considerably smaller, with a diameter of about 0.7m and a surviving depth of 0.15m. This contained no dating material but had been excavated into the fill of ditch [104].

Pit [039], sited to the north of the centre of the area, was more ovate (1.1m x 0.9m), and 0.25m deep (Pl. 7).

All of these pit-type features were found close to plough furrows but with no stratigraphic relationship with them. The features could represent post-holes or other features contemporary with the ridge and furrow, or mark the positions of trees and saplings growing on uncultivated land after the ploughing ceased.

A further pit or post-hole [031], situated where furrow [007] cut the backfilled ditch [009], was 0.25m deep and 1.9m diameter (Fig. 6). It cut the ditch but was cut by the furrow. Its fill (032) contained charred tubers of false oat-grass, which the palaeoenvironmental assessment has suggested may indicate a prehistoric date (Appendix 9).

6.3.4 The 'Trackway' (Pls. 8-12)

6.3.4.1 Northern 'Trackway' Ditch

A series of west-north-west to east-south-east aligned parallel ditches crossed the site about 80m north of the modern road. The northern ditch [023]/[109]/[127] was separated from the other features by up to 3m. It survived to a width of up to 3.3m in places, and a depth of up to 1.3m. The base was irregular, rounded in places but with indications of a more pointed profile elsewhere (Figs. 8-10). Its fills varied, being more mixed redeposited material towards the west. Two sherds of Roman pottery were found in fill (024). Charcoal fragments were present in several of the fills, and a concentration of apparently redeposited material (081) was recorded against the upper southern face. This was sampled and has been identified as coal shale (Appendix 9).

6.3.4.2 Southern 'Trackway' Ditch

The other ditches in this series had stratigraphic relationships and were interpreted as repeatedly re-cut versions of a single original ditch [021]/[053]/[106]/[110]. That initial ditch was in places at least 2.1m wide and 1.2m deep, with steeply sloping faces and a pointed base (Figs. 9, 10-12). It appeared that much of the fill had entered from the southern side, which may indicate the former presence of an upcast bank in that position. Any trace of that bank had been truncated by the machining or earlier ploughing. Fill (054) included 6 fragments of a ceramic tray or large pot similar to others found in Ditches [009], [011] and [029]. Analysis of a soil sample also identified spelt wheat and barley which may be indicative of Roman arable cultivation (Appendix 9). Abraded sherds of Iron Age or Roman pottery were found in the fills of [021].

The southern ditch [021]/[053]/[106]/[110] had become silted or filled by at least 0.6m when ditch [058] was excavated through its northern side. This earliest identified recut was a shallower feature (1m deep) with sloping sides and a much flatter base. It may have had a surface width of over 3m, although the evidence is unclear and could be the result of two subsequent disturbances such as unrecognised recuts, one near the southern edge and one at the northern side. Parts of two basal fill layers (059) and (060) remained, but insufficient survived to indicate from which side it was filled. Fill (059) contained two abraded sherds of 2nd century AD pottery. A thin band of dark brown silt (061) above (060) may mark the position of a short-lived ground surface, but this had been truncated.

The cause of the truncation to (061) was not identified on site but was later thought to have been a north-west to south-east aligned gully [133] which may have contained fill (062). The base of that putative feature was recorded as about 0.15m wide, 0.7m below the stripped surface (5.95m OD), but the actual width is unknown because of the oblique angle that it was encountered at within the excavated section (Fig. 7). Further cleaning of the section face for photography resulted in the visible base width reducing considerably. The presence of a feature crossing the line of the partly filled southern ditch indicates that the trackway ditch – and possibly the trackway – may have fallen out of use for a time.

Gully [133] had filled with 0.5m depth of silty sand (062) before another west-north-west to east-south-east aligned ditch [063] was excavated parallel to [053]/[106] and its re-cut [058]/[125], with its southern edge 2.8m north of that of the original ditch. Ditch [063]/[123] was about 2m wide and 0.8m deep. It had steeply sloping sides and a sloping base, and was the most northerly of this group of ditches. Alone of the features examined, this ditch contained unabraded pottery sherds of early/mid 2nd century AD date.

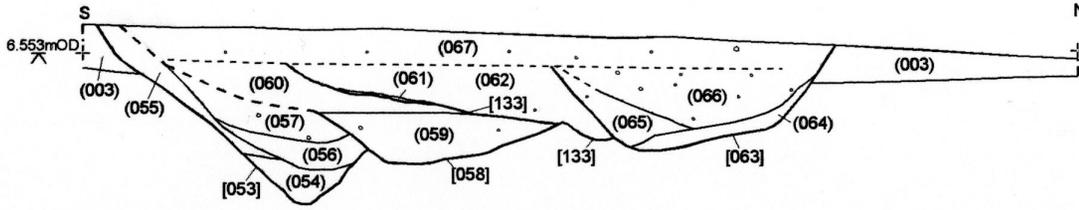


Fig. 7: Section across ditches and recuts [053], [058], [133] and [063], interpreted as the southern 'trackway' ditch. Layer (003) may represent a prehistoric or Roman buried soil.

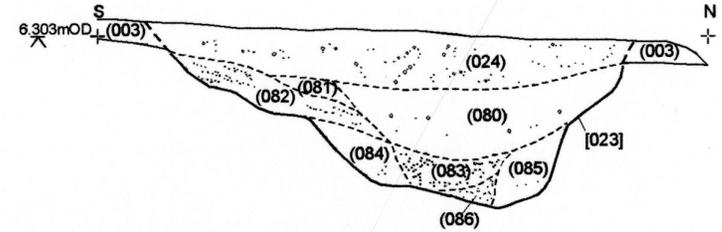


Fig.8: Section across northern 'trackway' ditch [023].

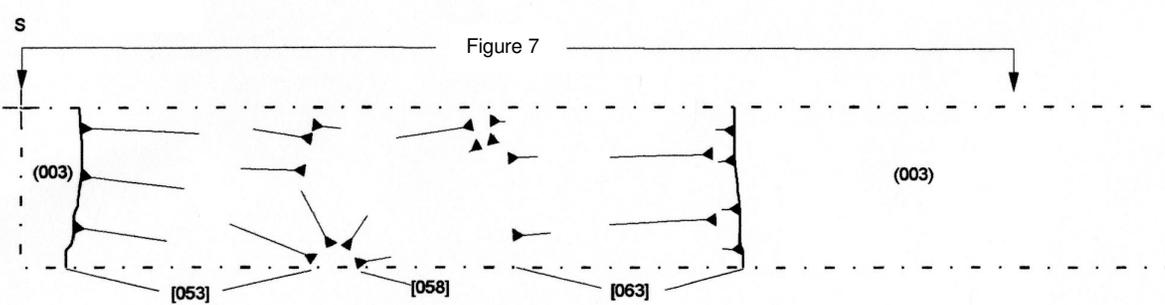
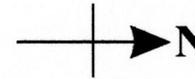
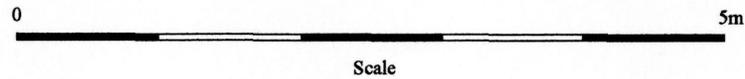
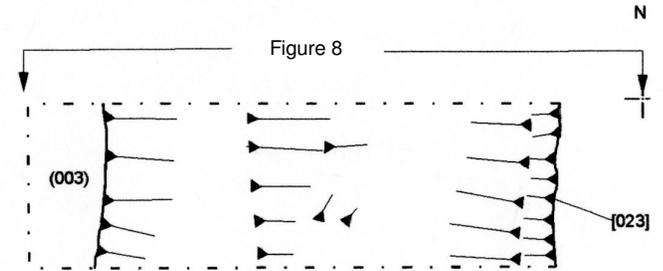


Fig.9: Plan showing the positions of features interpreted as the 'trackway' ditches.



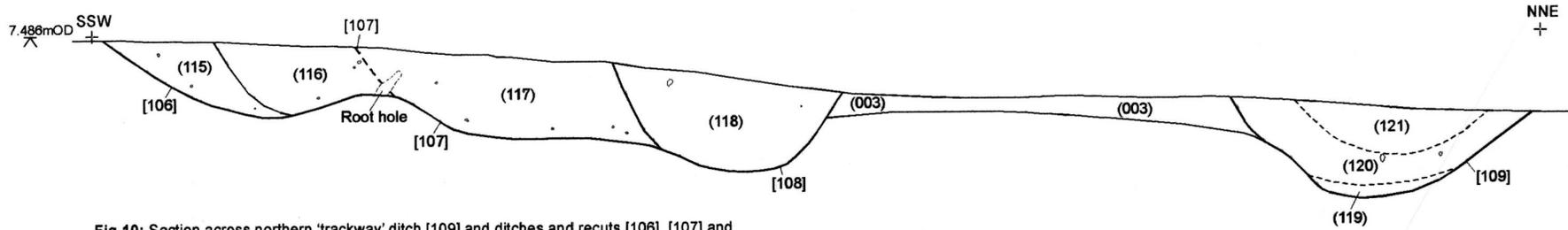


Fig.10: Section across northern 'trackway' ditch [109] and ditches and recuts [106], [107] and [108], interpreted as the southern 'trackway' ditch.

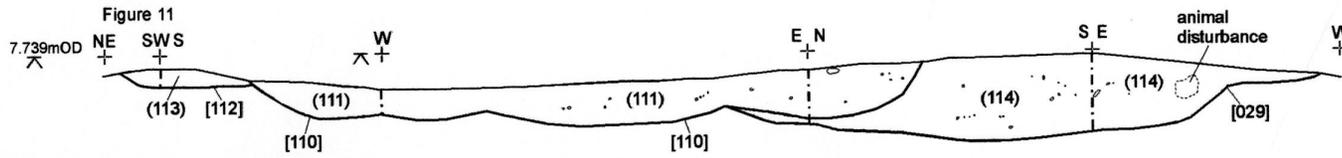


Fig.11: Sections across [110], interpreted as the southern 'trackway' ditch, enclosure ditch/gully [029], and undated earlier ditch [112].

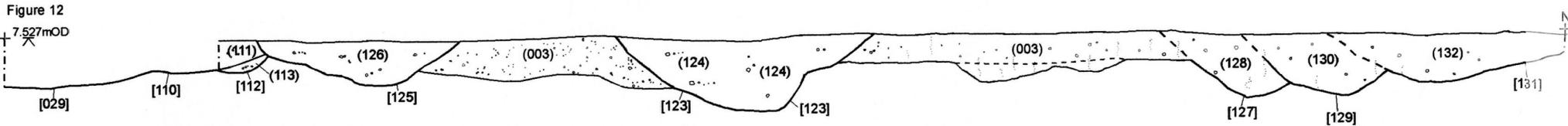
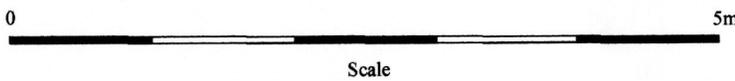


Fig.12: Section across southern 'trackway' ditch recuts [125] and [123], and undated earlier ditch [112].



The northern ditch, and the southern ditch with re-cuts, could represent a single land division or defensive feature which had been re-excavated on multiple occasions. They have been interpreted as ditches flanking a trackway, at a position which coincides with the northern edge of higher ground within the examined area.

6.3.5 Enclosure Ditches

Lengths of nine smaller ditches were found to the south of the putative trackway. Several of these appeared to be contemporary, defining part of a system of fields or stock enclosures; others may have served similar functions but did not seem to have been associated.

6.3.6 Ditches/Gullies [009], [011] and [029]

A 37m length of south-west to north-east aligned 1.1m wide gully [009] was identified at the south-west corner of the site (Fig. 6; Pl. 13). The feature had steeply sloping sides and a rounded base, about 0.38m below the stripped surface (8.39m OD). The gully may have continued to the north-east, as a short section of a 2.6m wide and 0.6m deep gully [029] extended south of the trackway near the eastern edge of the site (Figs. 11 and 12; Pl. 14). As the end of the southern gully only survived to a depth of 0.1m, the 25m gap between the two gullies is probably at least partly the result of truncation by plough furrow [077] and the machine removal of topsoil and subsoil. Gully [029] had cut an earlier north-south aligned ditch [112] which was only recorded in section, and was itself cut by the southern trackway ditch (Figs. 11 and 12). Both the stratigraphic position and the alignment of the gullies indicate that they had no functional relationship with the main trackway.

A short length of 0.7m wide and 0.14m deep gully [011], in the south-west corner of the site, could represent an associated feature, separated from [009] by 4m (Figs. 13 and 14). The alignment of gully [011] did not precisely correspond to that of gully [009], but the similarity of the finds from [009], [011] and [029] suggested a common date and purpose for these three features. A 0.8m diameter circular feature [100] was recorded immediately east of the gully terminal, and may represent the position of an entrance post (Pl. 15).

Twenty fragments of a ceramic tray or large pot were found in the fill (079) of [009], a further 20 in fill (012) of [011] and another 8 in its fill (099). In ditch [29], fill (114) contained 16 fragments. These sherds, some with visible vegetable tempering, resembled the briquetage vessels used for salt-making in the Roman and pre-Roman periods; ceramic sherds of this type were present on site only in these three features. They have been ascribed a broad date range from the start of the 1st millennium BC onwards, but ditches [011] and [029] also each produced a Roman sherd. Charred tubers of false oat-grass were retrieved from sampling fill (99) in ditch [011], and spelt wheat and barley traces were present in [029].

6.3.7 Ditches/Gullies [005] and [019]

The area was crossed by a 1.4m wide and 0.42m deep west-east aligned feature [005], 30m north of Composition Lane (Figs. 15 and 16, Pl. 16). The alignment was earlier than the ridge and furrow and does not obviously respect the trackway. No dating material was found but charred false oat-grass tubers, which may indicate a prehistoric date, were found in fill (070) (Appendix 9).

Part of a similar parallel feature [019] was found 36m to the north; a fragment of cattle bone was found in its fill (020).

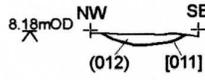


Fig.13: Section across Roman gully [011].

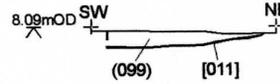


Fig.14: Section across Roman gully [011].

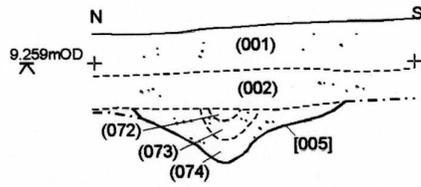


Fig.15: Section across Iron Age/Roman gully [005].

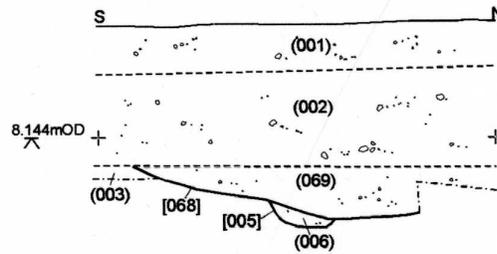


Fig.16: Section across medieval plough furrow [068] and Iron Age/Roman gully [005].

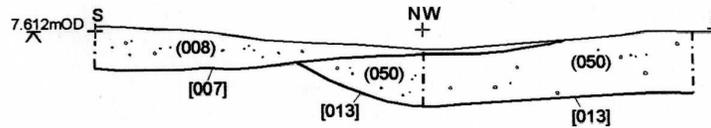


Fig.17: Sections across medieval plough furrow [007] and Iron Age/Roman ditch [013].

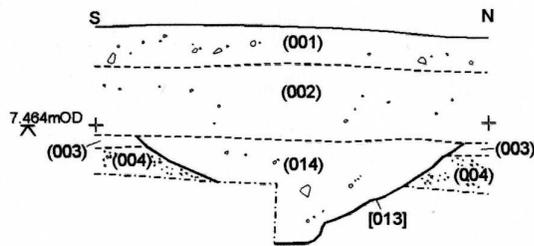
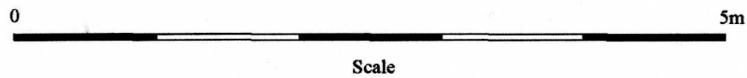


Fig.18: Section across Iron Age/Roman ditch [013], showing the full sequence of layers below the modern ground surface.



6.3.8 Enclosure [015]/[017]

A pair of linear features which may have formed the east side of a rectilinear enclosure was revealed at the western edge of the stripped area. This comprised a partially exposed ditch segment [017] and a separate straight length of ditch [015] 3m to its north (Pls. 17-19). The gap appeared to be a deliberate entrance, which was blocked to the south by gully [019], and the gap between the northern terminal of [015] and the southern trackway ditch may also have represented an entrance. The enclosure of which these ditches formed the east side can be identified on the geophysics plot (Fig. 2). Fill (018) in gully [017] contained one piece of large mammal bone and 6 unidentified fragments, and a charred hazelnut shell fragment, while in gully [015], fills (047) and (048) produced cattle mandible and tooth fragments, and (046) contained two fragments of undiagnostic but probably Iron Age or Roman pottery.

6.3.9 Ditches [013] and [104]

The western enclosure seemed to have replaced a field system formed by north-west/south-east aligned ditches which were parallel to the trackway ditches. Less than 1m length of [104] was visible, immediately east of the enclosure ditch [015]. 1m to its south was [013], which could be traced 4m inside the enclosure and about 26m to its east (Figs. 17 and 18; Pls. 17, 19 and 20). It is possible that ditch [019] formed part of the same phase of activity.

6.3.10 Buried Soil (003)

The natural sand deposit (004) was overlain by a silty sand layer (003) which appeared to be the remains of a soil developed prior to the excavation of any archaeological features (Figs. 3, 7-10, 12, 16, 18). The soil survived to a thickness of about 0.3m in places, and produced the only certain flint implement from the site, a flake of Mesolithic or Early Neolithic form (Appendix 4). As this layer was removed by machine, the artefact cannot be accurately located within the site.

7.0 Discussion

Although the palaeo-environmental assessment noted that the soil samples contained quantities of flint, and suggested some may have been struck or possibly fire-cracked, only one definitely worked flint was found from the site. An inspection of the sample residues did not identify any others amongst the natural flint river gravels. The struck flake indicates a low level of local activity in the Early Neolithic or slightly earlier, but none of the undated archaeological features are suspected to be this early. The flint was found in a buried soil layer, directly above natural deposits. The survival of this context should be anticipated in advance of and during any future archaeological interventions on adjacent sites, where it may be possible to examine it in more detail.

Dating of the archaeological features found on this site can only be provisional. The assemblage is not in a condition to allow the features to be ascribed with confidence to the Iron Age or Roman period, or theoretically even later. With the exception of three sherds of 2nd century AD pottery from Ditch [063], the Roman pottery from the site was in an abraded condition and may have originally derived from the spread of manure from the main settlement area, to the south-east, entering the fills of silting features at a later stage. Similarly, the Iron Age fabrics may be residual discarded sherds which were in the Roman topsoil and became incorporated in the backfilled features by chance.

The most prominent archaeological features are the parallel ditches, which have previously been interpreted as flanking various phases of an Iron Age or Roman trackway linking the settlement to the south-east with land to the west, parallel with the Roman coastline. The features have been described as trackway ditches in this report. However, this project has demonstrated that the ditches are at the change of slope, not an ideal position for a trackway, but well positioned to maximise the space on the higher ground. The gap between some of the ditches – the line of the supposed track - appears to have been blocked at one stage by gully [133], although it may have been reinstated later on. These factors may be reason to reinterpret these ditches as frequently re-excavated field boundaries (possibly a multiple ditched boundary), protecting enclosures of fluctuating size and shape on the higher ground to the south.

The nature of those enclosures has not been clarified by the 'strip, map, and sample' archaeological investigation. There are indications that enclosures of at least two periods are present within the defined higher ground, and although animal bone and wheat and barley remains were found, none were in sufficient quantity to suggest a particular use of the land.

Tray or vessel fragments from the ditches/gullies [009], [011] and [029] are described by the Roman pottery specialist as 'perhaps the most interesting element of the assemblage' and a possible function as saltmaking or salt transportation vessels has been suggested although no salt residue was evident on the sherds (Appendix 4). No evidence of Iron Age or Roman salt-processing has been identified at Winteringham but the ferry terminal would have provided opportunities for salt from the Lincolnshire coast to be transported by water as far as the major road. The finds are unlikely to relate to use of the enclosures.

The 'strip, map, and sample' of this site has not provided the information that had been anticipated, and the additional data gathered is insufficient to understand the site with confidence: the 5% sample of the linear features encountered was too small. Geophysical survey has indicated that more pronounced ditched features survive on land to the west, and this adjacent area could provide a better opportunity to elucidate the nature of activity occurring on the north-western fringe of the Roman Winteringham settlement. In this event, a higher sample percentage of features should be excavated to provide better evidence of dating and function.

8.0 Conclusion

Topsoil stripping of the area revealed archaeological features dating from the Iron Age to the post-medieval period. Medieval and later ridge and furrow ploughing had affected the sandy ground and had truncated some earlier features.

The extents of ditches which had been previously identified by evaluation trenching were recorded and additional stratigraphic relationships were established. Pits were excavated and environmental material collected for analysis but the dating of most features remains uncertain. Various north-west/south-east aligned recuts of ditches crossing the centre of the site were found to lie at the change of slope, which may place doubt on the previous interpretation of these as trackway ditches. The fills of the ditches contained Iron Age and Roman pottery, but the abraded Roman sherds may have entered partially back-filled Iron Age features.

No archaeological features were identified to the north of the ditches at the change of slope, but at least two phases of enclosures were present to the south. Environmental remains from the site include animal bone fragments from cattle and

large mammals, as well as wheat and barley which frequently indicate Roman arable crops. Several sherds of pottery were found which may have been used in a salt-transportation or salt-processing function, but no evidence of any industrial activity was identified.

The examined area forms part of a larger palimpsest of archaeological features known from air photography and geophysical survey. In itself, it has not provided sufficient information to understand this complex of archaeological remains, but any future opportunities to investigate adjacent land may enable a more definitive understanding of this site.

9.0 Acknowledgements

PCAS would like to thank A. F. Dowson & Son for commissioning this evaluation.

10.0 Site Archive

The documentary archive for the site is currently held by Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd. This will be deposited with North Lincolnshire Museum within six months of the completion of the report (archive accession code: WGMCY).

11.0 Bibliography

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