

**LAND ADJACENT TO NO. 1, PARSON'S LANE, ALFORD,  
EAST LINDSEY, LINCOLNSHIRE**

**SCHEME OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING  
AND RECORDING**

|                            |                |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| NGR:                       | TF 45077 75793 |
| PCAS job no.               | 1318           |
| Site code:                 | PLAM 14        |
| Planning application ref.: | N/003/01044/14 |
| Archive acc. no.:          | LCNCC 2014.189 |

Report prepared for  
  
Taylor Pearson Construction

by

B. Wheeliker

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Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd  
47, Manor Road  
Saxilby  
Lincoln  
LN1 2HX

Tel. (01522) 703800  
e-mail [info@pre-construct.co.uk](mailto:info@pre-construct.co.uk)

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## **Summary**

*Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out during the excavation of footings for four houses with associated amenities on land adjacent to no. 1, Parson's Lane in Alford in the East Lindsey district of Lincolnshire.*

*The site lies outside the present boundaries of the Alford Conservation Area, in an area of post-medieval urban development. A few finds of prehistoric and Roman artefacts attest to early activity in the area.*

*The present development site proved to be archaeologically negative.*

## **1.0 Introduction**

Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd. (PCAS) was commissioned by Taylor Pearson Construction to carry out a scheme of archaeological monitoring and recording on all development groundworks associated with the construction of four dwellings.

## **2.0 Site location and description (figs. 1 & 2)**

The small town of Alford is within the East Lindsey administrative district of Lincolnshire, approximately 21 km north-west of Skegness. It lies at the foot of the east-facing slope of the Lincolnshire Wolds, within the coastal fenland, and occupies a crossing-point on the stream formerly known as the Eau, but now canalised as the Wolds Grift Drain.

Alford's development can be clearly traced with the medieval street plans still distinct and later areas of development, characterised by high quality 19<sup>th</sup>-century properties, form pockets of suburbs on the edges of the conservation area. Alford's past prosperity and rich history is noticeable today in its architecture and buildings, noticeably the 19<sup>th</sup>-century developments. The site does not currently lie within the boundaries of the Alford Conservation Area as defined in the 2008 appraisal document, but falls within an area that had been demarcated for proposed later inclusion; notable buildings in its immediate neighbourhood include a late 19<sup>th</sup>-century school on the opposite corner of the junction and a 20<sup>th</sup>-century telephone exchange building on the opposite side of West Street (QuBE, 2008).

The application site lies in the western sector of Alford, to the west of the main town centre in a predominantly residential area made up of mainly terraced and semi-detached dwellings with some large detached units. It is situated at the junction of Parson's Lane and West Street, and measures 24 metres in depth along the site frontage with West Street and approximately 22.6 metres (max) in width along the frontage to Parsons Lane. The proposed site is at present a vacant building site, with a pair of semi-detached dwellings to the south on Parsons Lane frontage and a row of terraced dwellings to the east on the West Street frontage (CWA, 2014).

Central National Grid Reference: TF 45077 75793.

## **3.0 Geology and topography**

The town lies within an artificially drained fenland landscape, between 5 and 10m above sea level: the site itself is at an approximate Ordnance Datum height of 8.6m.

Alford town centre is situated on a deposit of drift glacio-fluvial sands and gravels, representing a reliably dry 'island' in the surrounding fenland. West Street runs along the westward extension of this deposit, which can be expected to form the drift geology of the site. The underlying solid geology is recorded as Cretaceous Ferriby Chalk (BGS, 1996).

## **4.0 Planning background**

Planning permission for a development of four houses with four sheds, the erection of boundary walls and fences and provision of parking spaces was granted by East Lindsey District Council in August 2014. This is a variation and addition to a former planning application, in which the construction of three houses was proposed.

Former planning applications relating to this development site are as follows:

- Application No. N/003/01727/05 was for the erection of one detached house, one block of 5 houses, one block of 3 houses and construction of two vehicular accesses. This was approved on 27 September 2005. The erection of one dwelling, one block of 5 dwellings and vehicular access to car parking have been implemented; the block of 3 dwellings remained outstanding.
- Application No. N/003/01259/08 was for the erection of a dwelling attached to a previously approved block of 3 terraced houses, erection of 1.8 metre wall, pedestrian access and alteration to vehicular access and car parking area previously approved under N/003/01727/05. This was approved on 13 August 2008.
- Application No. N/003/00952/11 was a renewal of the above permission N/003/01259/08. This was approved on 1 September 2011.
- Application No. N/003/01816/11 was an application to remove or vary Condition 12 imposed on N/003/1727/05 which related to archaeology. Permission was granted to vary the condition on 22 December 2011 (CWA, 2014).

The planning permission was granted subject to a number of conditions. Condition 10 requires a written scheme of archaeological investigation (this document) to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, while Condition 11 requires the archaeological site work to be undertaken in full accordance with the approved WSI, and the applicant to inform the Local Planning Authority at least fourteen days before the start of groundworks in order to facilitate monitoring arrangements. Condition 12 requires the report on the archaeological scheme of investigation to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and the Historic Environment Record Officer, and the site archive to be deposited with the County Museums Service, before the planning condition may be discharged.

## **5.0 Archaeological and historical background**

Evidence for prehistoric activity within Alford is limited to a small number of casual finds, although barrows are recorded to the east and west of the town (Lane, 2013). Finds occurring within 250m of the site include a late Neolithic or Bronze Age flint dagger, found in a garden on Hamilton Road (HER ref. 42534), a Neolithic polished stone axe, found in the grounds of Alford House (HER ref. 42532) and a Neolithic leaf-shaped arrowhead, found on Christopher Road (HER ref. 42538).

Roman activity is similarly represented by a small number of isolated finds: these were all recorded around the centre of the present town, less than 200m from the Eau, suggesting that the crossing point was well used during the Roman period, but that there was probably little or no permanent habitation (Lane, 2013). Two Roman coins have been found within 250m of the site: a denarius of Trajan, found in Parson's Lane (HER ref. 42537) and a small bronze coin of either Constantine I or Constantine III (HER ref. 42530).

A small manorial settlement at Alford is recorded in the Domesday Survey, indicating a probable Anglo-Saxon origin, although there is little archaeological evidence for Anglo-Saxon or early medieval occupation. The place-name 'Alford' is probably of Old English derivation, meaning 'the old ford', indicating that the river crossing was always the focus of the settlement. Alford received its market charter in 1283; its present parish church was built in the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century, supposedly on the site of an early medieval predecessor (Lane, 2013; HER ref. 45900).

Alford remained a small agricultural town into the post-medieval period; it flourished in the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, and many of the buildings in the town centre are of this date (Lane, 2013). Among these are the former Boys' School building, now derelict, on the opposite corner of the junction of Parsons Lane and West Street: this building, which appears on the 1891 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey 25" map, is constructed in polychrome English bond brickwork with a slate roof and has attractive bands of yellow and blue brickwork and stone detailing (similar in style to key buildings of this date within the conservation area). On the opposite side of West Street, set back from the road in an uncharacteristically spacious plot, is a 20<sup>th</sup> century telephone exchange building, which was built on the site of a row of terraces and is considered to be of interest by reason of being typical of its time and function (QuBE, 2008; HER refs. 47194-5). A smithy is marked on the opposite side of West Street, directly opposite the junction, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition OS map of 1906, and was still in use in 1971 (HER ref. 45894).

## **6.0 Methodology**

Using a 360° excavator with a flat-bladed bucket the site was cleared of some modern overburden and reduced 20cm below existing ground level. The same machine was then used to excavate the footings trenches, which were 70cm wide and a maximum of 60cm deep. In the southeast corner of the site a soakaway (4.50m x 2.30m) was excavated to a depth of 2.00m.

All features and deposits seen were recorded on standard PCAS context recording sheets, and the progress of the groundworks noted on a standard PCAS site diary sheet. Sample sections were drawn at intervals at a scale of 1:20, and plotted on a base plan. A colour slide and digital photographic record was maintained: a selection from this is reproduced as Appendix 1.

The groundworks took place between 10<sup>th</sup> October 2014 and 25<sup>th</sup> March 2015. The archaeological monitoring was undertaken by B. Wheeliker, M. Rowe, J. Sleaf and R. Savage.

## **7.0 Results**

Excavations of the soakaway revealed natural pale orange gritty sand (110) at a depth of 1.80m and sealed by a natural interface of orange brown sandy silt (109). This layer was sealed by the subsoil layer (101), which in turn was covered by rubble of a possible former yard surface (108).

Within the footing excavations only modern overburden (100) and layer (101) were recorded.

Initial groundworks exposed a modern pit and pipe trench. The fills of both features contained modern debris and petroleum type effluent.

## **8.0 Conclusion**

The site was archaeologically negative having revealed only modern services and a pit containing modern debris. Purportedly the site was formerly a garage- it is probable disused modern services and debris relate to this former structure. Natural geology was only exposed within the area of the soakaway excavation, therefore undisturbed layers may be present beneath the footprint of the new development.

## **9.0 Effectiveness of methodology**

The methodology employed during this project achieved its primary objective, ensuring that any archaeological remains that might have been present on the site would not have been destroyed unrecorded, while causing the minimum of disruption to the construction process.

## **10.0 Acknowledgements**

PCAS Ltd would like to thank Taylor Pearson Construction for this commission.

## **11.0 Site Archive**

The project archive is currently held at the offices of PCAS Ltd. in Saxilby, Lincolnshire while being prepared for deposition, and will be deposited with the Lincoln City and County Museum ('The Collection') by December 2015. The site report can be consulted under archive accession number LCNCC 2014.189.

## **12.0 Bibliography**

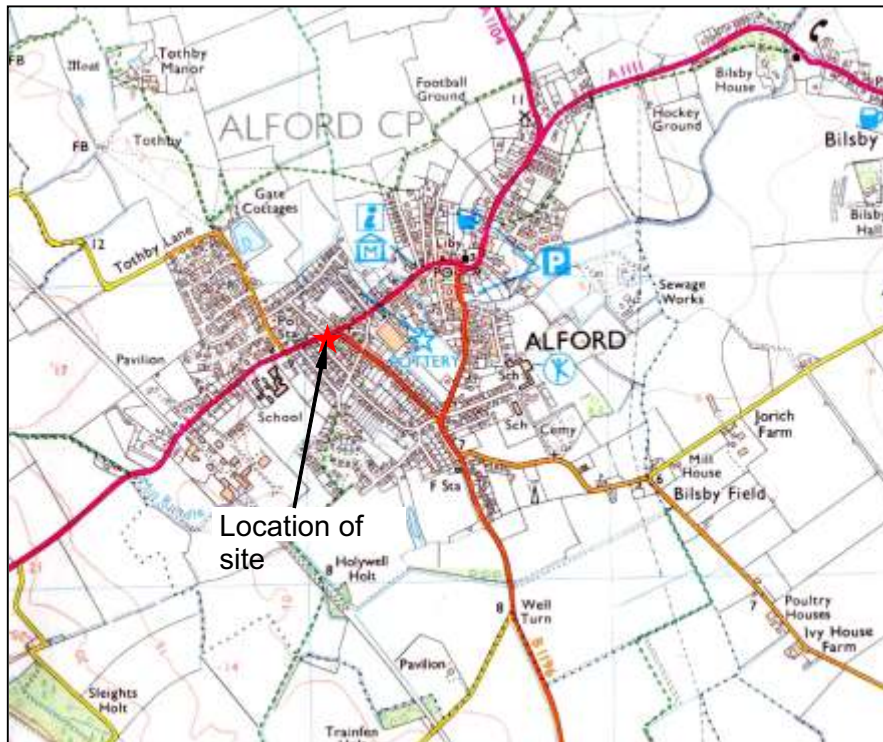
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**Figure 1:** Location plan of the site (marked in red) at scale 1:25,000. OS mapping © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. PCAS licence no. 100049278.

0 100m 200  
m m m



**Figure 2:** Location plan of the site (as-proposed) at scale 1:1250. The proposed development is outlined in red. Plan supplied by client.



Figure 3: Excavations conducted on 10.10.2014  
Plan at 1:200  
Sections at 1:20

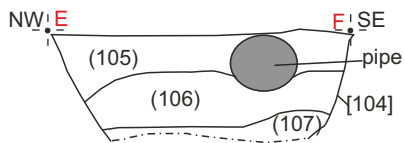
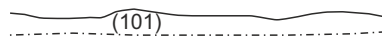
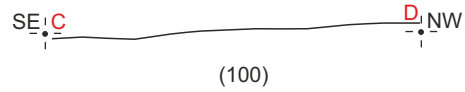
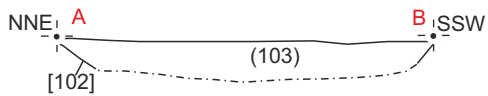
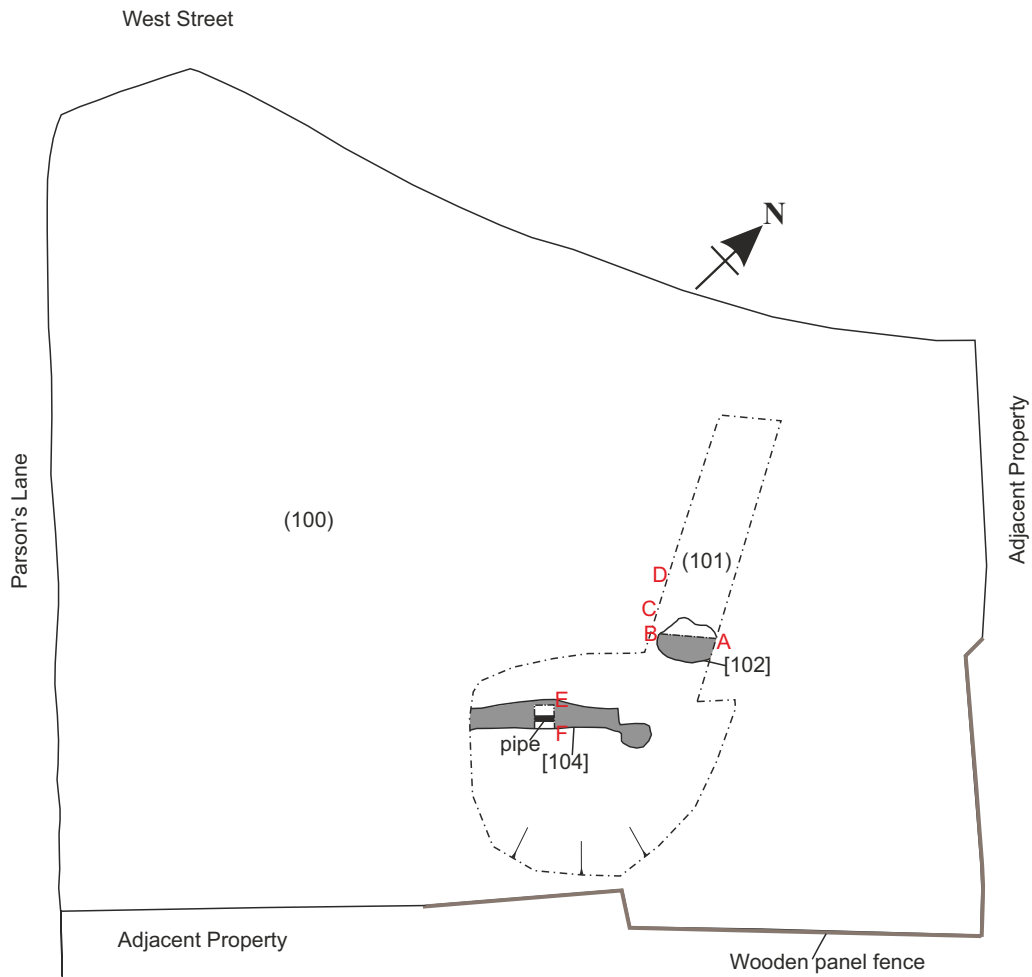
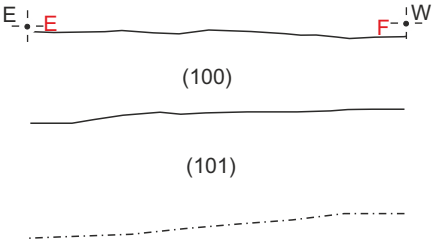
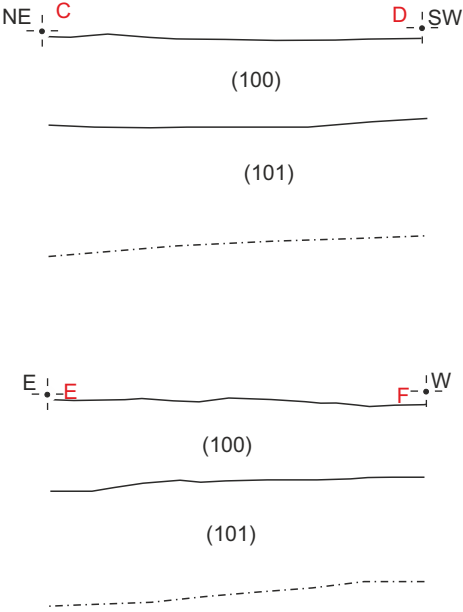
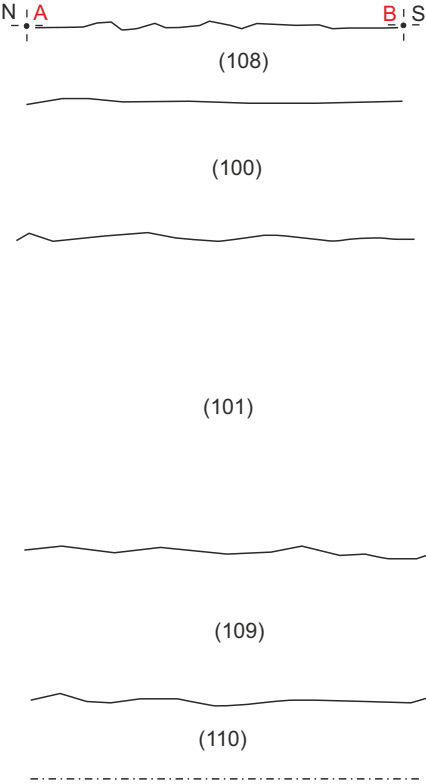
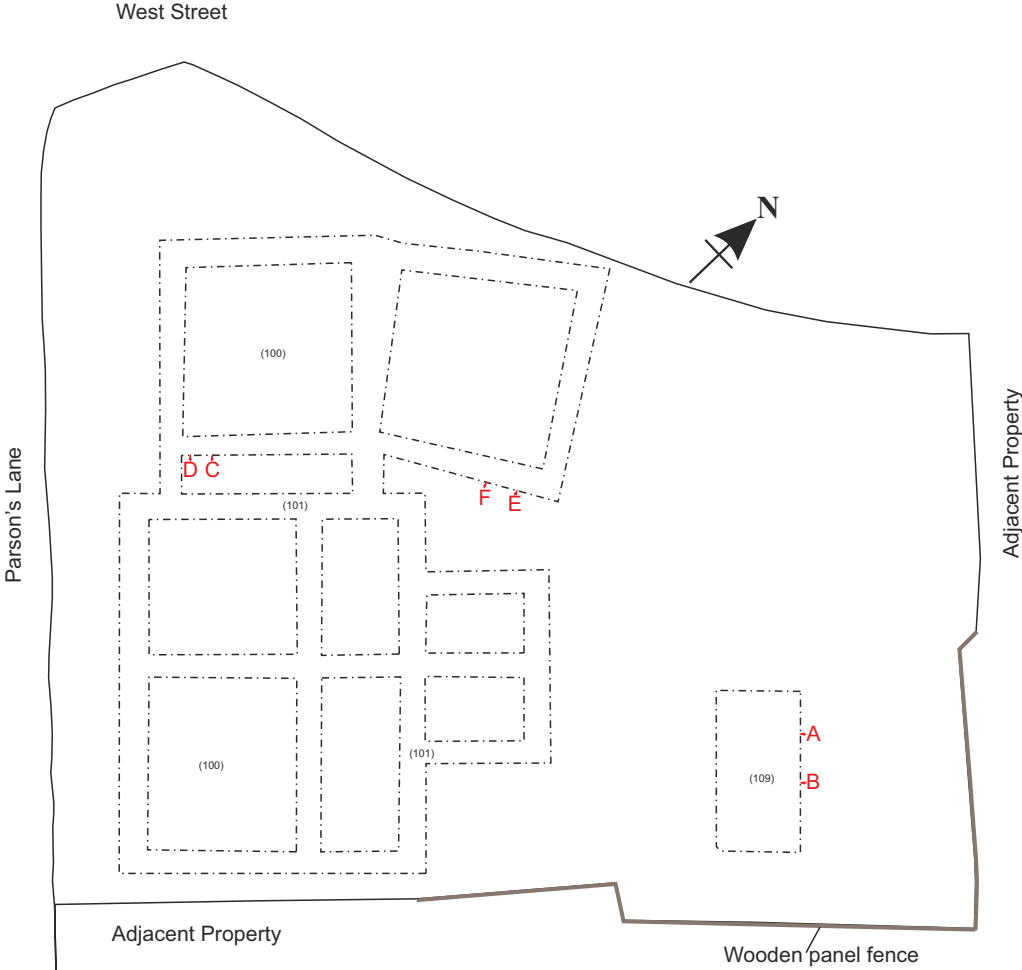


Figure 4: Footings and soakaway  
Plan at 1:200  
Sections at 1:20



## APPENDIX 1 Colour Plates



1. Site on arrival, looking northwest



2. Pit [102], looking southeast





3. Representative section, looking west (see fig. 3 C-D)



4. Pipe trench [104], looking northeast



5. Representative section, looking southeast (see fig. 4 C-D)



6. Representative sections, looking south-south-east (see fig. 4 E-F)





7. General shot of footings, looking east



8. Representative section, looking northeast (see fig. 4 A-B)

## APPENDIX 2 Context Summary

| <u>context no.</u> | <u>type</u> | <u>description</u>                               | <u>width (cm)</u> | <u>length (cm)</u> | <u>depth (cm)</u> | <u>finds</u> |
|--------------------|-------------|--|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 100                | layer       | modern overburden with a coarse clay like matrix |                   |                    | 34                |              |
| 101                | layer       | orange-brown coarse silt, very compact           |                   |                    | 80                |              |
| 102                | cut         | modern irregular pit                             | 100               |                    | 12, LoE           |              |
| 103                | fill        | of 102   | 100               |                    | 12, LoE           |              |
| 104                | cut         | pipe trench                                      | 90                | 480                | 26, LoE           |              |
| 105                | fill        | of 104   | 90                |                    | 12                |              |
| 106                | fill        | of 104   | 50                |                    |                   |              |
| 107                | fill        | of 104   | 56                |                    |                   |              |
| 108                | layer       | compacted brick and mortar former yard surface   |                   |                    | 20                |              |
| 109                | layer       | orange-brown sandy silt                          |                   |                    | 40                |              |
| 110                | layer       | pale orange sandy grit                           |                   |                    | 20, LoE           |              |

## APPENDIX 3 OASIS Summary

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