

HOLDINGHAM FARMS, HOLDINGHAM, LINCOLNSHIRE

REPORT ON A SCHEME OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION

NGR: TF 0640 4720
Planning Authority: North Kesteven District Council
Planning App. No.: 12/1022/OUT
PCAS Job No.: 1488
PCAS Site Code: HHFX14
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Prepared for

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Summary

Outline planning permission was granted by North Kesteven District Council for a residential development to the south of the A17 at Holdingham Farms, Holdingham, Lincolnshire.

An archaeological evaluation of the site in 2012 revealed two areas of activity; at the north-western corner, and within the south-eastern quadrant, where evidence of burnt agricultural features and timber structures featured in the latter. The results suggested that the site lay within Holdingham's hinterland and, prior to the medieval period, focused on subsistence farming.

Subsequent to evaluation, PCAS Ltd. was commissioned to undertake a scheme of archaeological mitigation works on the proposed development site to ensure the effective preservation by record of the site's archaeological resource.

Excavation exposed a limited number of archaeological features, the majority of which were of likely agricultural origin, dating from the medieval and post-medieval periods. Also exposed was a relatively large penannular ditch, probably a roundhouse, dated to within the middle to late Iron Age. This roundhouse appears to have been relatively isolated in the landscape, perhaps reflecting the importance of its former occupants. A small hearth, tentatively dated to the Mesolithic period was also identified.

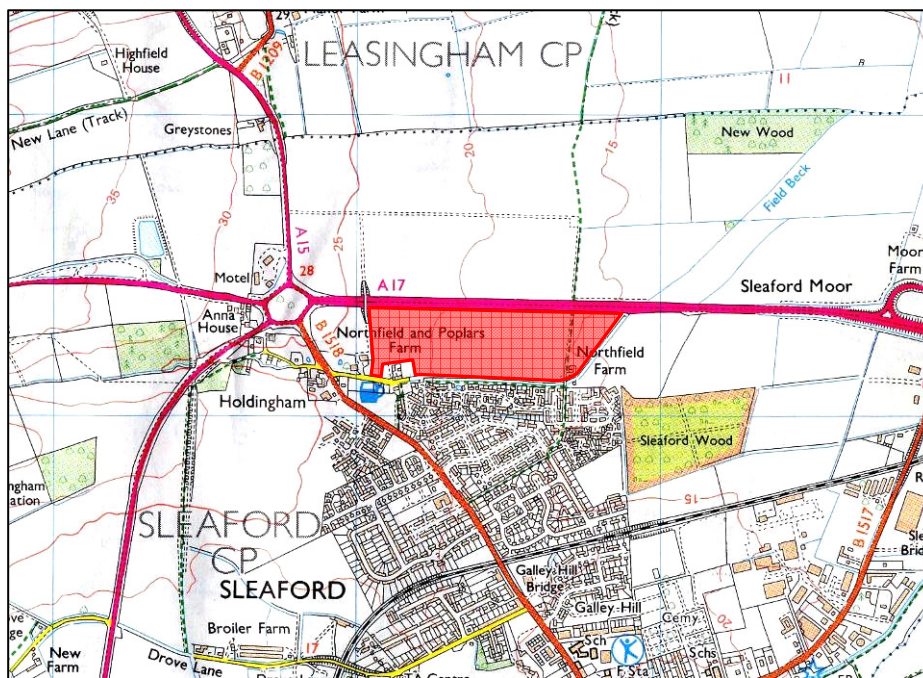


Figure 1: Location of the proposed development site at scale 1:25,000. The application area is outlined in red. (OS mapping © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. PCAS licence no. 100049278).

1. Introduction

Outline Planning Permission was granted by North Kesteven District Council for a residential development on land situated to the south of the A17 at Holdingham Farms, Holdingham, Lincolnshire.

A geophysical survey and archaeological trial trench evaluation conducted in 2012 had revealed two discrete areas of activity, suggesting that the site lay within Holdingham's hinterland and, prior to the medieval period, was used for subsistence agriculture and for small-scale activities requiring heat.

To fulfil the requirements of a condition attached to the Planning Permission granted by North Kesteven District Council, PCAS Ltd. were commissioned to undertake a programme of archaeological strip, map and record to ensure the preservation *by record* of the site's archaeological resource. The adopted scheme was approved by the Archaeological Advisor to NKDC.

2. Site Location and Description (figs. 1 & 2)

The site is within Sleaford Civil Parish in the administrative district of North Kesteven. Holdingham is a small hamlet situated on the north-western fringe of Sleaford's residential suburbs, c. 1.5km from Sleaford town centre.

The site is to the immediate south of the A17 Sleaford bypass, close to its junction with the A15. To its south is a residential estate centred on Winchester Way (Fig. 2). A water course, Field Beck, forms its southern boundary.

The site is centred on NGR: TF 0640 4720.

3. Topography and Geology

The c.14 hectare site comprises a single field; generally level but characterised by a slight south-facing slope.

The solid geology of the area comprises Cornbrash overlying Blisworth Clay (BGS 1972). Cornbrash is a sedimentary bedrock, formed between 159 to 169 million years ago in the Jurassic period (<http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/>). Drift deposits are not recorded.

4. Planning Background

Outline Planning Permission (12/1022/OUT) was granted by North Kesteven District Council for a '*Residential Development of 290 dwellings, a 70 bed Nursing Care Centre, Health Centre, distributor road with footpath and cycleway, internal roads and footpaths, public open space and noise attenuation measures (outline with all matters reserved)*' on land off Furlong Way & South of A17 Holdingham, Sleaford, Lincolnshire.

On 4 July 2013, the Senior Historic Environment Officer for NKDC advised that, '*It is recommended that an archaeological scheme of works condition is applied to any permission granted. This can be secured by condition K5Ca. The scope of archaeological work has not been defined at this stage. An archaeological evaluation has been undertaken and identified archaeological remains across part of the site*'.

An archaeological planning condition attached to the permission stipulates:

(20) 'No development shall take place unless and until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title has secured the implementation of an agreed written specification that sets out a programme of work to mitigate the impact of construction to known archaeological remains. The specification shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the District Planning Authority.'

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) came into force in March 2012. The NPPF places the responsibility for dealing with heritage assets affected by development proposals with the developer. Local planning authorities now need to be assured by those applying for planning permission that any such remains are not under threat. As a result developers are required to produce a definitive method of mitigating the effect of development on the historic environment within the planning process.

Section 12, paragraph 141 of the NPPF states that, *'Local planning authorities should make information about the significance of the historic environment gathered as part of plan-making or development management publicly accessible. They should also require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted'*.

The scheme of archaeological mitigation consisted of:

- The excavation of three open 'strip, map, record' areas focused on two specific zones of archaeological significance; identified at the north-western corner of the site (A) and its south-eastern quadrant (B) (**Fig. 2**).
- Excavation A comprised a single strip of approximately 0.5 hectares;
- Excavation B consisted of two stripped areas, located within the two most archaeologically significant parts of the c. 4-hectare south-eastern quadrant and totaling 1.26 ha:

B1: 60m x 60m	= 0.36 hectares
B2: 75m x 120m	= 0.90 hectares

This document presents the results and conclusions of the archaeological strip, map and record.

5. Archaeological and Historical Background

Archaeological evaluation in 2006 in the field immediately to the west of the site (NGR: TF 060 472) retrieved a Bronze Age flint scraper and two sherds of hand-made pottery. These finds were recovered towards the southern part of the investigated site (HER ref. 64183). The same evaluation recovered a small number of Romano-British pottery sherds, dating from the mid 2nd to 3rd and possibly 4th centuries, although the finds were all residual, deriving from Saxon contexts (NGR: TF 059 472). A late Roman bronze coin of Constantius II had been pierced, and was probably in decorative use long beyond its intended circulation (HER ref. 64185).

Romano-British burials and associated pottery were found in 1995 during building construction at NGR: TF 060 469 – c.200m southwest of the area under investigation (HER ref. 60878).

Saxon settlement remains have been identified less than c. 100m to the west of the site, in the Lincoln Road area, and the place-name Holdingham is of Old English origin, meaning 'the homestead or estate of Halda's people', indicating a pre-Norman origin (although the Domesday Book does not include it (HER ref. 63670)).

A 2006 evaluation on Lincoln Road identified deposits, artefacts and features of Anglo-Saxon date (NGR: TF 059 472), as well as Bronze Age and Romano-British material. Subsequent excavations at the same site revealed an extensive Middle Saxon settlement, including a post-built hall structure close to the western boundary of the current site. The settlement remains were concentrated at the northern part of the field, closer to the A17, with evidence of industrial activity and associated field systems and enclosures further south.

Archaeological investigation at the McDonalds site on Holdingham Roundabout in 2001 identified several sunken floored buildings of similar date to the Lincoln Road site (S Malone, APS, pers comm.), and almost 500 pottery sherds recovered from the site date from the early and mid-Anglo-Saxon periods (c. 5th - 9th centuries), with a small number of later wares also being present (Vince and Young 2002).

The settlement of Holdingham is first documented in Feudal Aids of the 14th century. Twenty households are recorded in the Diocesan Returns of 1563. The earthwork remains of medieval crofts have been identified from aerial photographs (HER ref. 63670a), and medieval deposits and features were recorded during the Lincoln Road evaluation. A 12th century stone structure, possibly a watermill, was found, although this had been demolished by the 13th century. Further investigation in 2007 suggested that the walls formed part of an enclosure rather than a building.

Post-medieval features and finds, including a pond and a linear band of stonework were also recorded during the Lincoln Road evaluation. A number of ditches were found to correspond to post-medieval field boundaries.

In April 2012 a fluxgate gradiometer survey was undertaken at the site by Pre-Construct Geophysics (PCG), identifying a number of possible buried archaeological features. Those of greatest potential significance were situated towards the western part of the site; to the east of the Lincoln Road Middle Saxon settlement. The results indicated potential pits and ditches elsewhere within the site, including a circular or penannular ditch in the mid-eastern area and possibly another ring ditch to the east of Northfield and Poplar Farm. An extensive zone of predominately weak magnetic anomalies recorded in the central and eastern regions was considered to have limited archaeological potential. This zone (considered to be potential quarrying) appeared to truncate ridge and furrow, implying a relatively late origin. Strong responses were recorded across the former site of Poplar Farm, adjacent to the pedestrian flyover, over a large pit-type feature (north of Northfield and Poplar Farm) and at various points along the northern and southern boundaries (PCG 2012).

In August 2012, PCAS undertook a trial trench evaluation at the current site. Archaeological remains proved relatively sparse, but two discrete areas of activity (see Fig. 2) were identified: the smaller area, at the north-western corner of the site was evaluated by Trenches 1 and 3: Trench 2 exposed only post-medieval features and is excluded from further consideration; the larger area at the south-eastern quadrant encompassed Trenches 15-18, 20-23 and 27 (Trench 28 was blank; Trench 29 produced only a post-medieval feature and is also excluded). It may be significant that Trenches 17, 20, 22 and 27, all of which contained features with heat-affected fills, lay roughly on an east-to-west line across the site. It is uncertain whether the heat-related features in these trenches were of domestic, industrial or agricultural origin - environmental assessment yielded limited results, indicating only possible grain processing. The dating remains on a broad spectrum, but it seems

plausible that open-field cultivation was not introduced in this area until the 12th century or later, and consequently that features sealed by the subsoil, but otherwise undateable, are likely to be of early medieval or pre-Conquest date.

Possible post-hole groupings in Trenches 15 and 21 suggested the presence of structures; although a low level of finds retrieved overall suggests that any such structures were likely to have been agricultural rather than domestic. The presence of furrows in several trenches indicates that the site was brought wholly into open-field cultivation during the Middle Ages.

In summary, the 2012 evaluation results suggested that, in the medieval period the site lay within Holdingham's hinterland and that, prior to that it was used chiefly for subsistence agriculture and for small-scale activities requiring heat that were probably carried out at a safe distance from dwellings and similar roofed structures.

6. Methodology

In accordance with the archaeological condition issued by NKDC, the primary aim of the mitigation scheme was to facilitate the preservation by record of archaeological remains and:

- To establish their form and function;
- To recover stratified dating evidence;
- To establish the sequence of archaeological remains on the site;
- To interpret archaeological remains in the context of known archaeology in the vicinity.

The strip, map and record excavation involved the mechanical stripping of topsoil and subsoil to the archaeological/natural horizon under the supervision of a suitably qualified archaeologist. This allowed an unobscured view of previously undisturbed archaeological features.

Features encountered were excavated in accordance with the methodology set out in the mitigation strategy document (PCAS 2014). Plan and section drawings were prepared at appropriate scales –1:20 or 1:50 for plans and 1:10 or 1:20 for sections – and these drawings were fixed to an overall site plan created by GPS surveying. All contexts were recorded on standard PCAS record sheets, and the progress of each stage of the project was recorded on standard PCAS site diary sheets. A colour slide, digital and monochrome photographic record was maintained throughout the project.

7. Results

Area A (Fig. 3)

Area A, in the North West corner of the site, was situated where geophysical survey had identified a low number of potential archaeological features, which were targeted during the 2012 evaluation by three trenches (1 - 3). Trenches 1 and 3 revealed archaeological features, including a ditch of possibly medieval date.

The excavations revealed only three features: two ditches and a relatively short gully. One ditch has been dated by associated pottery to the medieval period, the other to the post-medieval period, and the short gully was possibly little more than a glacial fracture of natural origin.

After setting out, the topsoil and subsoil was stripped, revealing natural cornbrash and mid-orange-brown sandy clay. This was encountered at c. 0.50m below existing ground level.

Overlying the natural was a subsoil, 0.2m thick and topsoil, 0.3m thick. Both of these were a mixture of clay silts.

Towards the northwest corner of the stripped area, the eastern limit of a linear ditch, [004], was exposed. This feature had been previously encountered in Trench 1 of the evaluation. It was orientated E-W, was 0.85m wide, 0.09m deep and it terminated c.5m to the east of the western baulk. No associated finds were recovered during the excavation phase of works, but sherds of 11th to 12th century pottery had been recovered during the evaluation. It is surmised therefore that the ditch was of medieval origin.

An extensive E-W orientated, and broadly parallel, ditch was encountered towards the centre of the stripped area. This was 1.6m wide and approximately 0.5m deep. Three slots excavated through this feature each revealed a bulk homogenous fill, and recovered finds comprised two pottery sherds, fourteen fragments of animal bone and two fragments of glass. Collectively, these artefacts have been dated between the late 17th – early 19th century (Appendices 4, 5 and 7), indicating that this feature is most likely a post-medieval field boundary.

The only other feature exposed in this area was a poorly defined gully, [006], which had been sampled in Trench 1 of the evaluation. It was 4.5m long, 0.82m wide and 0.22m deep and orientated approximately NE-SW. It contained a fill of sandy silt, which yielded no finds. It seems likely this feature was of natural origin; possibly a glacial fissure.

Area B (Figs. 4-6)

Area B was located towards the central and eastern part of the proposed development zone. Within this, three sub-units were excavated, focussing on the areas of highest archaeological potential: B1 in the north west; B2 north-central, and B2 south-central. Geophysical survey in this area had indicated a number of potential archaeological anomalies, including further linear features and a relatively large ring ditch. The potential of these anomalies was confirmed during evaluation, where a number of features were identified and sampled by Trenches 16 (B1), 20 (B2N) and 21 (B2S). The excavations exposed six archaeological features: a hearth, possibly of Mesolithic date, and a post-medieval furrow in B1; a later prehistoric ring ditch, a post-medieval field boundary and an undated pit (possibly of natural origin) in B2N; and an undated curvilinear ditch in B2S.

In each of the three stripped areas, the natural substrate comprised a mixture of cornbrash and orange-brown sandy clay, at c. 0.50m below existing ground level. Overlying this was c. 0.2m of subsoil and 0.3m of topsoil.

Area B1

Excluding a furrow, only one convincing archaeological feature was exposed in Area B1; a seemingly isolated pit situated close to the southern trench edge. This was circular in plan, and contained a sandy clay fill which yielded a single flint bladelet, dated to the Mesolithic period (Appendix 6). A bulk sample taken from this feature for analysis (Appendix 8) showed that the fill of the pit comprised fragmented deposits of charcoal, in addition to fire-cracked stones representing a typical hearth waste assemblage. No evidence of charred plant remains were present.

Towards the northwest corner of the stripped area, a N-S orientated linear feature, [033], was encountered. This displayed fairly regular, flat and shallow profile and contained a single sandy clay deposit which produced no artefactual remains. Its shallow sides, flat base and N-S orientation would suggest that this was probably the remnant of a post-medieval furrow.

Area B2 north

The greatest 'concentration' of archaeology was in Area B2 north, which exposed an elongated pit (possibly just a glacial fracture), an east-west orientated linear ditch, and a relatively large and interesting penannular ditch with an east-facing entrance defined by a causeway situated between two ditch terminals. This ring ditch was possibly the drip gully for a large roundhouse, some 13m in diameter. Eight slots were excavated through this feature, six of which yielded finds, consisting of pottery and animal bone: 214 pottery sherds dated to the middle to late Iron Age, with the assemblage consisting mostly of shell-gritted jars and a few sherds from bowls (Appendix 3). Fragments of animal bone recovered from the ring ditch derived from a range of medium to large mammals, including cattle and sheep (Appendix 5). A total of 144 pottery sherds were recovered from the two ditch terminals, which represents the majority of the pottery assemblage recovered from this feature. This deposition pattern, however, was not evident with regard to the animal bone, which had a more even distribution throughout the sampled interventions.

No internal features such as post holes or hearths were exposed within the ring ditch (possibly due to plough truncation).

To the south of the roundhouse, a single ditch, [014], extended E-W from trench edge to trench edge. This was 0.86m wide and 0.32m deep, and contained a homogenous sand clay fill. A single annular bead or pendant was recovered from this material; made of either jet or shale (Appendix 7). The artefact is similar to a discoid pendant found in North Yorkshire, which was associated with a Roman gold finger-ring, although jet was also very popular during the Victorian period, so confirming the date of this feature is problematic. The relative absence of any other finds within the ditch may suggest an agricultural origin, such as a field boundary. However, no such boundary is depicted on historic OS mapping, suggesting that it may pre-date the 19th century. This feature appears to parallel the E-W ditch, [028], excavated in Area A, potentially indicating that they were both part of the same post-medieval field system.

The only other feature exposed in this area was a poorly defined linear, [040]; 3.6m long, 0.52m wide, and 0.16m deep, with steep sides and a generally flat base. It contained an homogenous sandy clay fill, which produced no finds. Possibly this feature was of natural origin; possibly a glacial fissure.

Area B2 south

Excavations in the southernmost area, B2 south, revealed a single curvilinear ditch, [037], orientated E-W. This was approximately 60m long, 0.75m wide and 0.22m deep, and it contained an homogenous mid-grey-brown sandy clay. No finds were recovered from any of the three slots that were excavated through this feature, suggesting an agricultural rather than domestic origin. This feature cannot be identified on historic mapping, and its form, slightly curving with two discrete terminals, indicates that it was most likely not a field boundary, and could potentially be a later prehistoric feature. Due to a dearth of finds, this is difficult to clarify.

8. Discussion and Conclusions

Excavations across the two areas revealed a thin distribution of archaeological remains; for the most part seemingly disconnected.

Of the two ditches exposed in Area A, one has been securely dated to the medieval period, whilst the other may be of post-medieval origin; the latter does not appear on historic OS mapping, indicating a pre-1842 date. Both features likely reflect agricultural activity – the delineation of land using ditches for both definition and drainage purposes.

Area B revealed some indications of domestic occupation at the site during the middle to late Iron Age (c. 400 BC to AD 100); the possible roundhouse exposed in Area B2 north has been dated by associated pottery.

Roundhouses are common to Iron Age domestic sites, either in double-ring, or single-ring form as seen here, varying in diameter between 6m and 15m (Haselgrove 1999: 117). The diameter of the ring ditch at Holdingham was c. 13m, which puts it in the upper bracket size wise.

No re-cutting of the ring ditch was observed during the excavation process, suggesting possibly that this feature/structure was not long-lived, or it may be that the relatively substantial penannular ditch was the latest manifestation of a more humble forerunner.

As noted above, the majority of the pottery recovered from the ditch was in the terminals; 144 sherds of a total 214. This sort of distribution may have occurred randomly, with the terminals being an easily accessible discard point, although it could also indicate something a little more structured.

An excavation in 2003 at Barnetby Le Wold in North Lincolnshire identified a middle to late Iron Age ring ditch enclosure (Bray, Palmer-Brown and Rylatt 2003). This also was 13m in diameter, the ditch being 1.8m wide and 0.55m deep. Almost all of the associated pottery was recovered from the terminals of the ring ditch, some of which appeared to have been pressed into the clay lining the feature.

Structured deposition has been observed on other Iron Age sites, and it has been postulated that such phenomena may reflect the purposeful deposition of waste resulting from events and rituals that marked the threshold between an enclosed area and its surroundings (Hill 1995).

The idea of structured deposition, certainly of the pottery, is potentially further supported by the fact that pottery distribution pattern was not mirrored in the animal bone recovered from the ring ditch. Fragments of animal bone were fairly evenly spread throughout the eight slots excavated. Therefore, it would seem apparent that if the pottery deposition in the terminals was purely functional (a convenient discard point), then this would also be a feature of the animal bone.

Careful examination inside and outside of the roundhouse failed to identify any associated features. It may be that any post holes or pits that were originally present have simply been ploughed away during millennia of agricultural activity.

This large unenclosed roundhouse appears to have existed in relative isolation from any immediate neighbouring settlement. This is interesting given the context of the general area, where a number of simple and complex enclosures have been identified on aerial photographs taken in the surrounding area, including a high volume of possible prehistoric cropmarks to the north in and around Leasingham and Ruskington (Winton 1998: 67) and to the south at Osbournby (*ibid*: 62). Sleaford during this period would have been a key site for

coastal and overseas trading, as much of the area to the east would have been marshland with creeks, or open sea, allowing ships to reach inland (May 1993: 12). This high level of activity could, in some sense, aid our understanding of the seeming isolation of the roundhouse. The fact that it was at distance from any other dwelling could potentially indicate that this was the home of a relatively powerful individual.

To the north west of the roundhouse, in Area B1, an isolated pit contained burnt material, and yielded a single flint blade, dated to the Mesolithic period. A sample taken from this pit did not identify any charred plant remains such as cereal crops or wild-gathered foods, however it did contain fire cracked stone and fragmented charcoal throughout, suggesting its likely use as a hearth.

9. Effectiveness of Methodology

The scheme of archaeological mitigation was completely successful in building upon the results obtained during the evaluation phase of works, with a mixture of agricultural and domestic features having been exposed and excavated. Previously unknown remains, which would have otherwise have been destroyed, have been effectively preserved by record.

10. Bibliography

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Figure.2: Overall site plan showing the four strip, map, and record areas and major archaeological features (in red).
1:2500

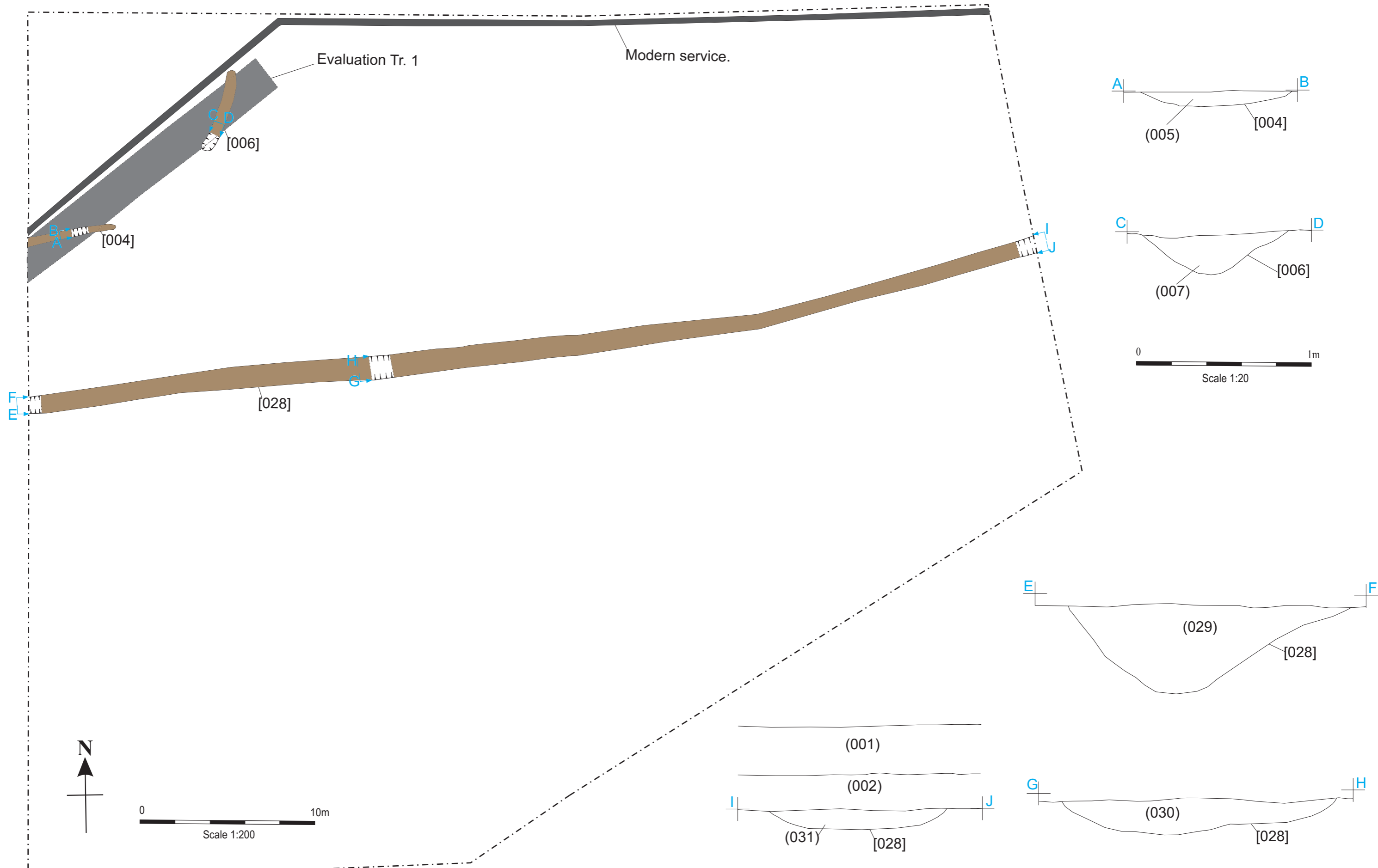


Figure 3: Area A plan (1:200) and sections (1:20)

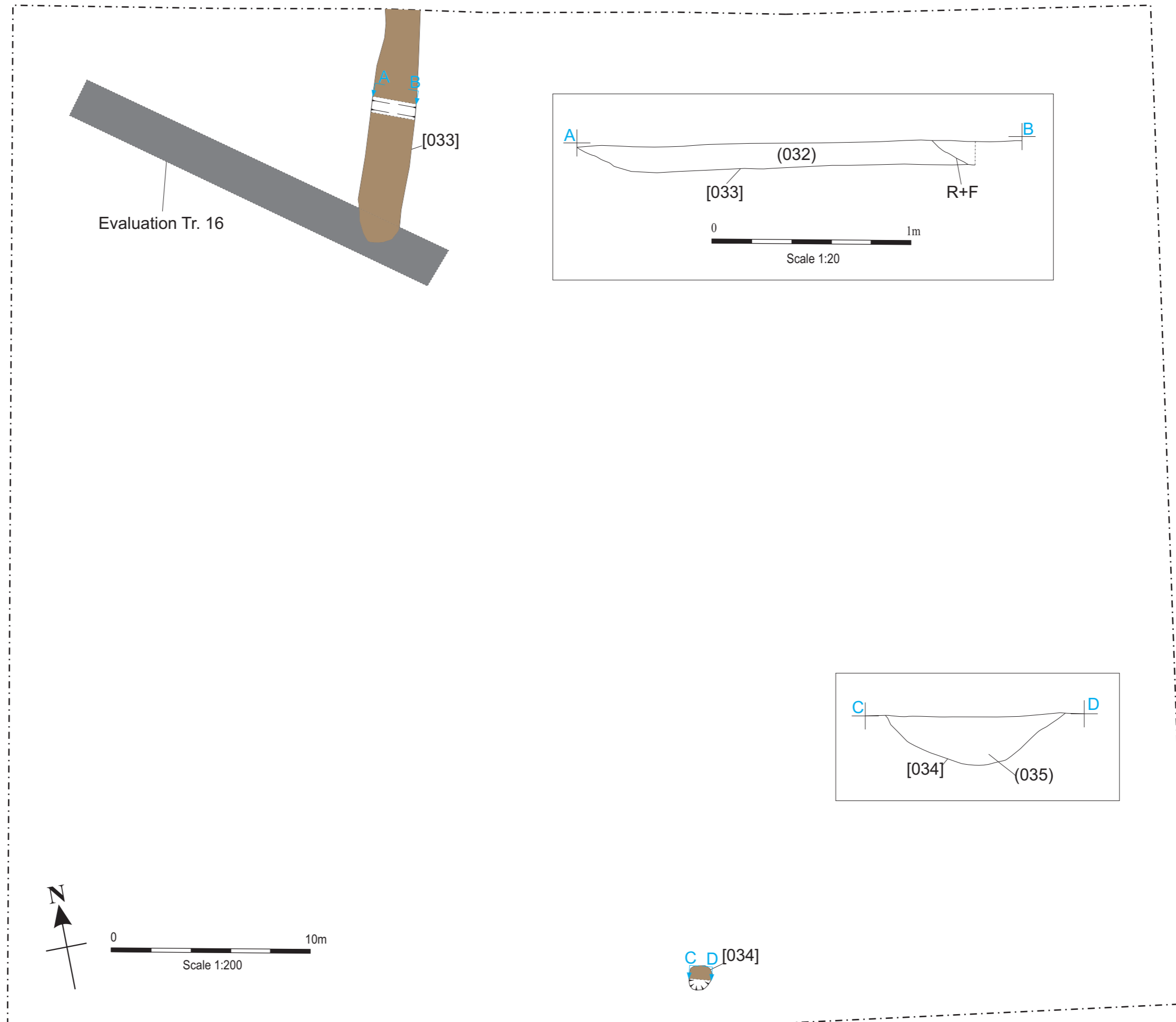


Figure 4: Area B1 plan (1:200) and sections (1:20; inset).

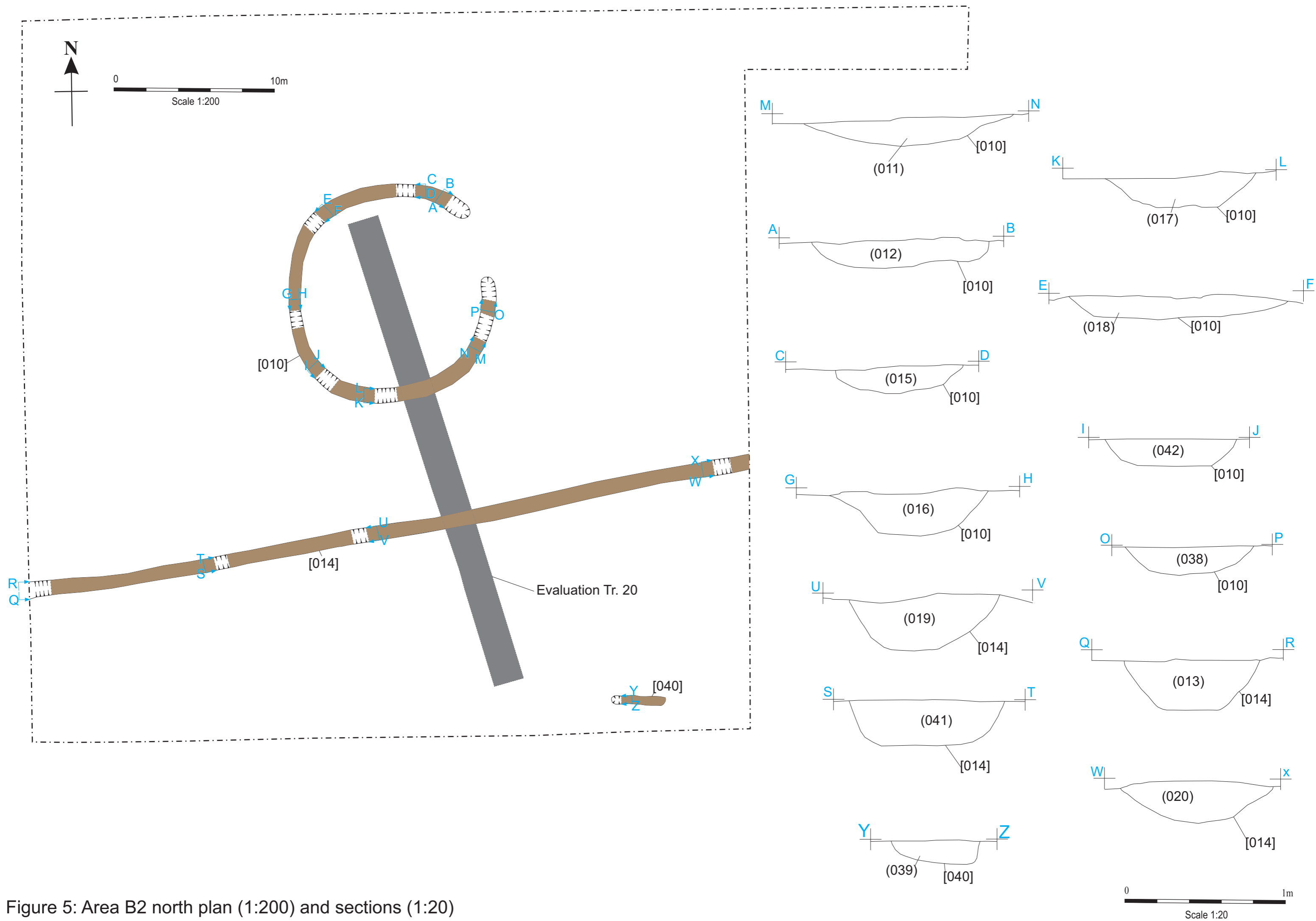


Figure 5: Area B2 north plan (1:200) and sections (1:20)

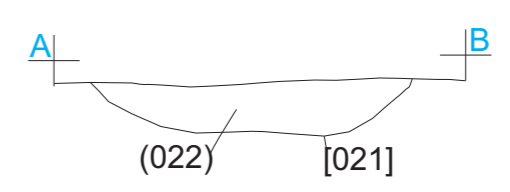
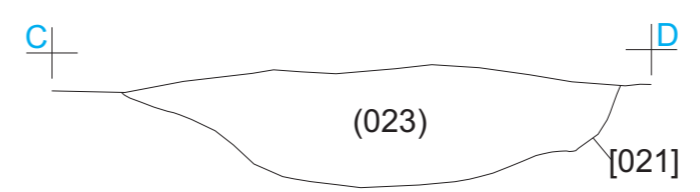
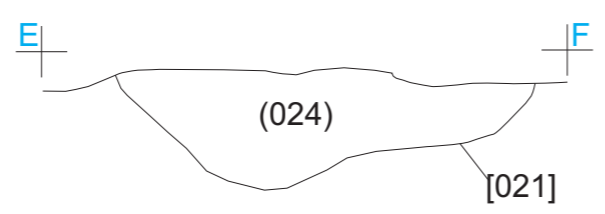
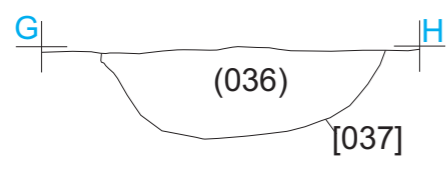
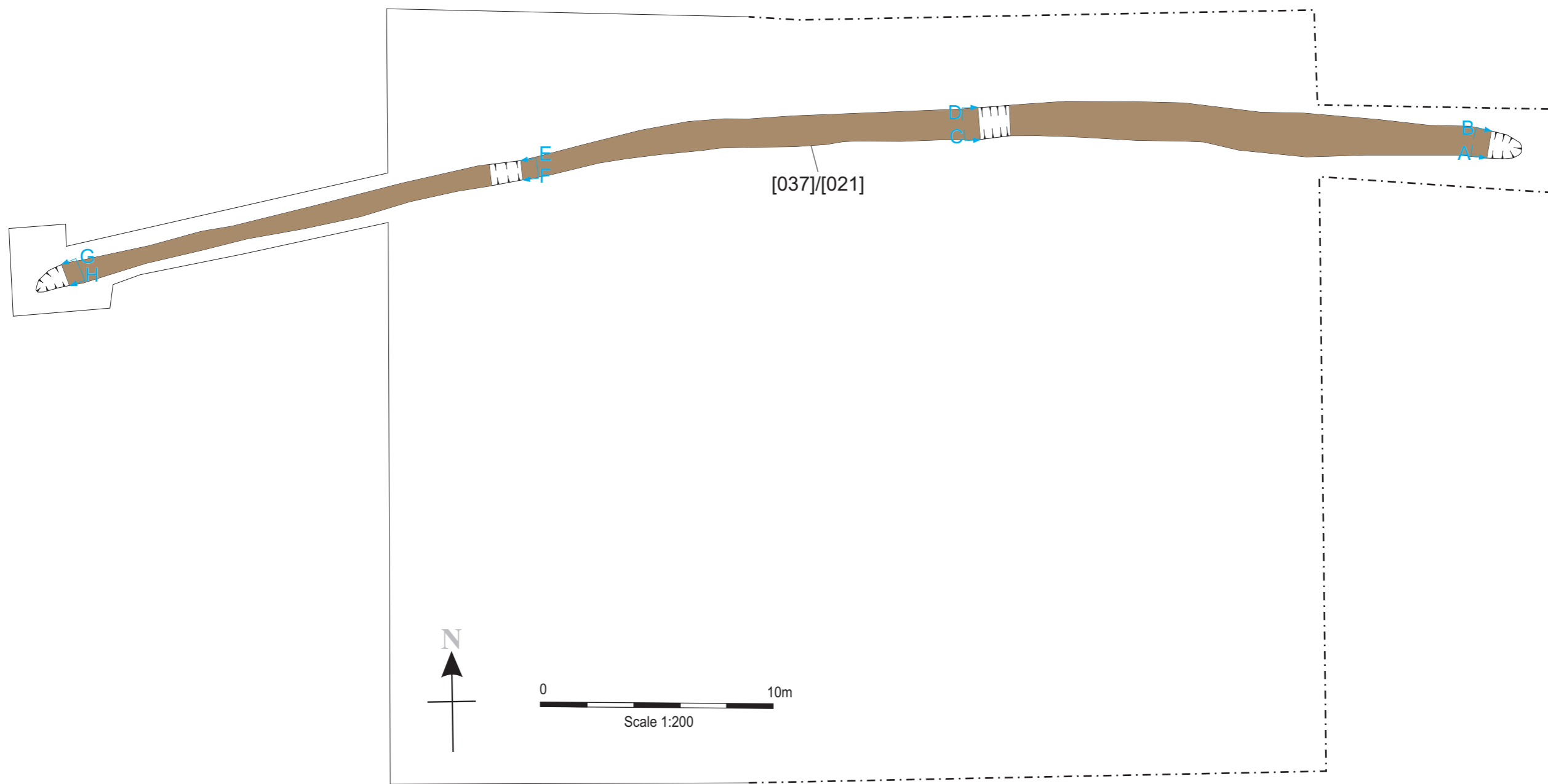


Figure 6: Area B2 south plan (1:200) and sections (1:20)

Appendix 1 – Holdingham Farms Excavation Context Summary

Context No.	Type	Description
001	Layer	Topsoil. Mid to dark greyish brown sandy silt. Friable. Contained infrequent pieces of limestone brash throughout. 0.3m deep.
002	Layer	Subsoil. Slightly orange hued mid brown clay sand. Firm. Infrequent pieces of limestone brash throughout deposit. 0.2m deep.
003	Layer	Natural substrate. Cornstone brash. Variable in colour. Pale grey, pale yellowish brown or mid brown.
004	Cut	Shallow E-W linear in Area A. Very shallow sides and an irregular uneven base. Approx. 5m in length, 0.85m wide and 0.09m deep.
005	Fill	Of [004]. Mid grey brown clay sand. Fairly loose. Occasional limestone fragments throughout deposit. No finds.
006	Cut	Elongated linear feature in Area A. Most likely naturally formed. Steep sides and a narrow concave base. Elongated roughly N-S. 4.5m long, 0.82m wide and 0.22m deep.
007	Fill	Of [006]. Mid orange brown sandy silt. Moderately firm, with occasional small pieces of limestone throughout. No finds.
008	-	Void
009	-	Void
010	Cut	Ring ditch of possible roundhouse in Area B. Near complete circle, except for an 'entrance' to the north east. Concave, irregular sides with an irregular, uneven base. Over 10m long, 1.3m wide and 0.16m deep.
011	Fill	Of [010]. Greyish brown sandy clay. Firm. Limestone fragments throughout deposit. Contained pottery and animal bone fragments.
012	Fill	Of [010]. Same as (011). Contained pottery and animal bone fragments.
013	Fill	Of [014]. Greyish brown clay sand. Firm. Limestone fragments throughout deposit. Contained a ring made out of jet.
014	Cut	E-W orientated ditch in Area B. Concave sides and an irregular concave base. Over 10m long, 0.86m wide and 0.32m deep.
015	Fill	Of [010]. Same as (011). Contained pottery sherds.
016	Fill	Of [010]. Same as (011). Contained pottery sherds.
017	Fill	Of [010]. Same as (011). Contained fragments of animal bone.
018	Fill	Of [010]. Same as (011). Contained pottery sherds.
019	Fill	Of [014]. Same as (013). No finds.
020	Fill	Of [014]. Same as (013). No finds.
021	Cut	E-W orientated ditch in Area B. Concave sides, and an irregular to flat base. Over 10m long, 0.85m wide and 0.16m deep.
022	Fill	Of [021]. Greyish brown sandy clay. Moderately firm, with limestone fragments throughout deposit. No finds.
023	Fill	Of [021]. Same as (022). No finds.
024	Fill	Of terminus end of [021]. Same as (022). No finds.
025	Deposit	Orange brown sandy clay. Contains moderate amounts of limestone fragments throughout deposit. Natural deposit, cut by terminal end of [021].
026	Cut	Terminal end of ring ditch in Area B. Same as [010]. Concave irregular sides and a concave base.
027	Fill	Of [026]. Same as (011). Contained pottery sherds and animal bone fragments.

Appendix 1 – Holdingham Farms Excavation Context Summary

028	Cut	E-W ditch in Area A. Concave sides and a moderately flat base. Over 10m long, 1.5m wide and 0.52m deep.
029	Fill	Of [028]. Grey brown sandy clay. Moderate to firm compaction. Contains frequent limestone fragments throughout deposit. No finds.
030	Fill	Of [028]. Same as (029). Contained pottery, animal bone and glass.
031	Fill	Of [028]. Same as (029). Contained pottery sherds.
032	Fill	Of [033]. Mid grey brown sand clay. Frequent limestone fragments throughout deposit. Possibly natural.
033	Cut	Irregular natural feature in Area B. Shallow sides and an uneven base. Approx. 5m long, 2.2m wide and 0.14m deep.
034	Cut	Circular shaped pit in Area B. Gently sloped sides and a shallow concave base.
035	Fill	Of [034]. Mid yellow brown sandy clay. Frequent limestone throughout deposit. Possible burnt material also located within pit. A single flint blade was also recovered.
036	Fill	Of [037]. Mid grey brown sandy clay. Firm. Contained frequent limestone fragments throughout.
037	Cut	E-W orientated ditch. Moderately sloped sides and a concave base. Over 10m long, 0.75m wide and 0.22m deep.
038	Fill	Of [010]. Same as (011). No finds.
039	Fill	Of [040]. Mid grey silt clay. Firm. Moderate amounts of limestone fragments throughout deposit.
040	Cut	E-W oriented linear feature. Steep sides and a flat base. 3.6m long, 0.52m wide and 0.16m deep.
041	Fill	Of [014]. Same as (013). No finds.
042	Fill	Of [010]. Same as (011). No finds.



Plate 1: General shot of site (looking NE).



Plate 2: General shot of site (looking SE).



Plate 3: Ditch [028] (looking W).



Plate 4: Ditch [004] (looking W).

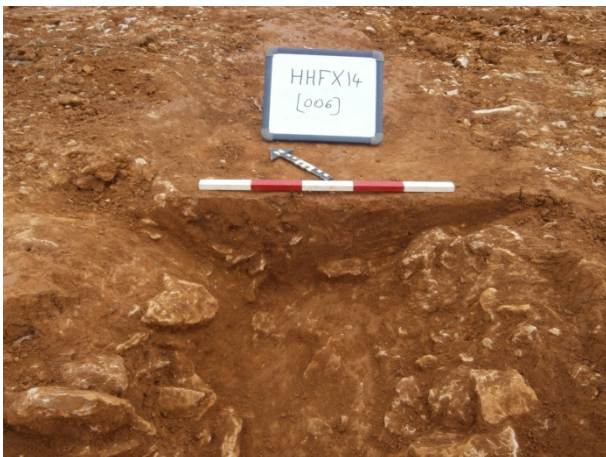


Plate 5: Feature [006] (looking NE).



Plate 6: Pit [034] (looking N).



Plate 7: Ring ditch [010] (looking S).



Plate 8: Ditch [014] (looking W).



Plate 9: Pit [040] (looking E).



Plate 10: Ditch [021]/[037] (looking E).

Land at Holdingham Farms, Holdingham, Lincolnshire (HHFX14): The Iron Age pottery assessment

I.M. Rowlandson

October 30th 2015

Introduction

Two hundred and fourteen fragments were presented for study (2.116kg, RE 0.38). The pottery could be dated to the mid to late Iron Age, sometime in the second half of the first millennium BC. The assemblage mostly consisted of shell-gritted jars many with Scored ware decoration and a few sherds from fine shell-gritted jars and bowls. Much of the pottery was in a good fresh condition with the majority of the assemblage retrieved from only three contexts. A few fragments of fired clay were also present.

Methodology

The pottery has been archived using count and weight as measures according to the guidelines laid down for the minimum archive by *The Study Group for Roman Pottery* (Darling 2004) using the codes developed by the City of Lincoln Archaeological Unit- CLAU (see Darling and Precious 2014). The East Midlands Iron Age form code system developed by Knight (1998) has been used to characterise the attributes of the handmade pottery. A tabulated summary by context and a sherd archive are presented below. The date provided represents the pottery recorded here: the main text of the report and other specialist contributions should be consulted to ascertain the overall date attributed to each context.

Results

Dating summary					
Context	Spot date	Comments	Sherd	Weight (g)	Total RE %
011	MLIA	A medium sized group including fragments from shell-gritted Scored ware and a jar with in-turned rim. The absence of late La Tène fine ware among the group makes a Middle Iron Age date for this group more likely.	61	696	7
012	MLIA	A medium sized group including a few fragments of shell-gritted Scored ware jars. A fragment from a shell-gritted jar with an everted rim probably dates this group towards the later end of the first millennium BC. Also present were fragments of shell-gritted fired clay.	68	788	5
015	MLIA	A small group of shell-gritted sherds including a fragment of scored ware.	8	54	0
016	IA?	A single sherd.	1	3	0
027	MLIA	A medium sized group including fragments of shell-gritted Scored ware jars. Also present were fragments of shell-gritted fired clay.	76	575	26

Fabric Summary							
Fabric code	Fabric group	Fabric details	Sherd	Sherd %	Weight (g)	Weight %	Total RE
IASH1	Calcareous	Iron Age Shell Grittied: Site Fabric 1- Common to abundant coarse shell	179	83.64%	1834	86.67%	18
IASH4	Calcareous	Iron Age Shell Grittied: Site Fabric 4- mid to Late Iron Age fine shell-gritted wares	17	7.94%	108	5.10%	13

Fabric Summary							
Fabric code	Fabric group	Fabric details	Sherd	Sherd %	Weight (g)	Weight %	Total RE
IASH7	Calcareous	Iron Age Shell Grittied: Site Fabric 7- Abundant coarse to fine shell with rare Punctate Brachiopod fossil shell	5	2.34%	87	4.11%	7
IAGROG	Grog	Iron Age Grog tempered wares	1	0.47%	7	0.33%	0
FCLAY	Fired Clay	Fired Clay	12	5.61%	80	3.78%	0

Form Summary							
Form	Form Type	Form Description	Sherd	Sherd %	Weight (g)	Weight %	Total RE
-	Unknown	Form uncertain	139	64.95%	1235	58.36%	0
J	Jar	Unclassified form	58	27.10%	778	36.77%	16
JB	Jar/Bowl	Unclassified form	2	0.93%	11	0.52%	0
JBEV	Jar/Bowl	Everted rim	4	1.87%	41	1.94%	5
JEV	Jar	Everted rim	1	0.47%	7	0.33%	2
JIR	Jar	In-turned rim	10	4.67%	44	2.08%	15

The range of forms present consisted of a typical range of jars with everted or in-turned rims many with Scored ware decoration that suggests a mid to late Iron Age date. These jars were recorded in shell-grittied fabrics including examples with Punctate Brachiopod fossil shell and grog-grittied vessels. A few vessels in fine shell-grittied fabrics were present the forms included a globular jar or bowl with an everted rim from Context 12 and a jar with an in-turned rim both of these forms need not support a 1st century AD date and it is more likely that they represent earlier La Tène activity on the site in the first half of the 1st millennium BC (Knight 2002).

Discussion of Potential

The assemblage demonstrates evidence of further mid to late Iron Age occupation in the vicinity of Sleaford. The area around Holdingham has produced evidence for late Iron Age pottery (eg. Allen 2007) and more detailed comparison would be appropriate as a number of contexts from this site have good fresh medium sized groups of pottery.

Recommendations

The pottery is stable and this assemblage should be deposited in the relevant local museum.

In the event of the production of a final report on the pottery from this site a more detailed comparison of this group with the wealth of data from the Sleaford area would help to inform the discussion of the site and place the pottery from this site in its regional context.

None of the pottery recorded here would be suitable for illustration as the forms present can be easily paralleled to existing publications.

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Pottery Full Archive

Context	Fabric	Form	Rim	Body	Base	Decoration	Vessels	Alt	Drawing	Comments	Join	Sherd	Weight (g)	Rim diam	Rim eve
011	IASH1	-	-	-	FLP	HM	1			BASE		1	8	0	0
011	IASH1	-	-	-	U	HM	1			BASE SCRAP		1	8	0	0
011	IASH1	-	-	-	FLP	HM	1	ABR		BASE		1	16	0	0
011	IASH1	-	-	U	-	HM	5	ABR		BS		5	18	0	0
011	IASH1	-	-	U	-	HM	38			BS; IRF		38	304	0	0
011	IASH1	-	-	U	-	HM; SCR	9			BS; IRF		9	257	0	0
011	IASH4	JB	-	U	-	HM	1			BS; R	012	2	11	0	0
011	IASH7	-	-	-	FLT	HM	1			BASE; IRF		1	10	0	0
011	IASH7	-	-	-	U	HM	1			BASE; IRF		1	16	0	0
011	IASH7	J	-	U	FLP	HM	1			BASE; IRF		1	38	0	0
011	IASH7	JIR	RD	OV/GLOB	-	HM	1			RIM; R		1	10	14	7
012	FCLAY	-	-	-	-	HM	0	ABR		BS; OX; SHELL-GRITTED OXIDISED FABRIC; NOT CERTAINLY A VESSEL MAY BE FIRED CLAY		9	67	0	0
012	IASH1	J	-	U	FLP	HM	1			BASE; IRF		7	232	0	0
012	IASH1	J	-	U	-	HM	1			BS; IRF; ?VESSEL TOTAL		35	214	0	0
012	IASH1	J	-	U	-	HM; SCR	1			BS; IRF; MORE SHERDS MAY HAVE BEEN LUMPED WITHIN OTHER LINES BUT NOT POSSIBLE TO ISOLATE TO THIS VESSEL		12	221	0	0
012	IASH4	JBEV	EVR	GLOB	-	HM	1			RIM; R; MID-LATE IRON AGE	011	4	41	16	5
012	IASH7	-	-	U	-	HM	1	ABR		BS; IRF; PB SHELL		1	13	0	0
015	IASH1	-	-	U	-	HM; SCR	1			BS; R; SCRAPS		3	7	0	0
015	IASH1	-	-	U	-	HM; SCR	2			BS; OX/R		5	47	0	0
016	IASH1	-	-	-	-		1			BS		1	3	0	0
027	FCLAY	-	-	-	-	HM	0			BS; OX; SHELL-GRITTED OXIDISED FABRIC; NOT CERTAINLY A VESSEL MAY BE FIRED CLAY		3	13	0	0

Pottery Full Archive

Context	Fabric	Form	Rim	Body	Base	Decoration	Vessels	Alt	Drawing	Comments	Join	Sherd	Weight (g)	Rim diam	Rim eve
027	IAGROG	-	-	U	-	HM; SCR	1	VAB		BS; CALC VOIDS?; IRF		1	7	0	0
027	IASH1	-	-	U	-	HM	45	ABR		BS; IRF; SCRAPS		45	192	0	0
027	IASH1	-	-	U	FLP	HM; SCR	1			BASE; IRF		1	22	0	0
027	IASH1	-	-	U	-	HM; SCR	1	ABR		BS; IRF		2	39	0	0
027	IASH1	-	-	U	-	HM; SCR	1	ABR		BS; OX/R		3	45	0	0
027	IASH1	-	-	U	-	HM; SCR	6	ABR		BS; IRF		6	121	0	0
027	IASH1	J	FEEI	U	-	HM	1			RIM; IRF		1	10	16	4
027	IASH1	J	RD	OV	-	HM	1			RIM; IRF		1	26	20	7
027	IASH1	J	FPE	OV	-	HM	1			RIM; IRF		1	37	30	5
027	IASH1	JEV	TRIF	-	-	HM	1			RIM; OX/R/OX		1	7	0	2
027	IASH4	-	-	U	FLP	HM	1			BASE; R		1	16	0	0
027	IASH4	-	-	-	FLP	HM	1	ABR		BASE; R		1	6	0	0
027	IASH4	JIR	FEI	OV/GLOB	-	HM	1			RIM; R		9	34	18	8

**THE POST ROMAN POTTERY FROM LAND AT HOLDINGHAM FARMS,
HOLDINGHAM, LINCOLNSHIRE (HHFX 14)**

JANE YOUNG CERAMIC CONSULTANT

INTRODUCTION

Two post-Roman sherds were presented for examination. The pottery was examined both visually and using a x20 binocular microscope, then recorded using the fabric codenames (CNAME) of the City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit (Young, Vince and Nailor 2005). The assemblage was quantified by three measures: number of sherds, vessel count and weight and the resulting archive entered onto an Access database. Recording of the assemblage was in accordance with the guidelines laid out in Slowikowski, *et al.* (2001) and complies with the Lincolnshire County Council's *Archaeological Handbook* (sections 13.4 and 13.5).

CONDITION

The pottery is in slightly worn but stable condition with fragments weighing 11grams and 48 grams.

THE RANGE AND VARIETY OF MATERIALS

The sherds recovered were found in ditch **028** and comprise two large Staffordshire/Derbyshire cylindrical jars in Brown-glazed Earthenware fabrics (BERTH). The jar found in fill **029** is of mid 17th to 18th century type whereas the vessel from fill **030** is of late 17th to 18th century type. Both vessels have internal dark brown glazes.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The two recovered sherds suggest some post-medieval activity in the area of the site.

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Young, J, Vince, A and Nailor, V, 2005. *A Corpus of Anglo-Saxon and Medieval Pottery from Lincoln*, Lincoln Archaeological Studies 7, Oxbow, Oxford

**Holdingham Farm,
Holdingham, Lincolnshire (HHFX 14)**
The Faunal Remains
By Jennifer Wood

Introduction

A total of 77 (779g) refitted fragments of animal bone were recovered by hand during a scheme of archaeological works undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Lincoln on land at Holdingham Farm, Holdingham, Lincolnshire .

The remains were recovered from ring ditch [010] and ditch [028], both dated from the Iron Age period.

Methodology

The entire assemblage has been fully recorded into a database archive. Identification of the bone was undertaken with access to a reference collection and published guides. All animal remains were counted and weighed, and where possible identified to species, element, side and zone (Serjeantson 1996). Ribs and vertebrae were only recorded to species when they were substantially complete and could accurately be identified. Undiagnostic bones were recorded as micro (rodent size), small (rabbit size), medium (sheep size) or large (cattle size). The separation of sheep and goat bones was done using the criteria of Boessneck (1969) and Prummel and Frisch (1986) in addition to the use of the reference material. Where distinctions could not be made the bone was recorded as sheep/goat (S/G).

The quantification of species was carried out using the total fragment count, in which the total number of fragments of bone and teeth was calculated for each taxon. Where fresh breaks were noted, fragments were refitted and counted as one. The data produced the basic NISP (Number of Identified Specimen) counts.

The condition of the bone was graded using the criteria stipulated by Lyman (1996). Grade 0 being the best preserved bone and grade 5 indicating that the bone had suffered such structural and attritional damage as to make it unrecognisable. Also fusion data, butchery marks (Binford 1981), gnawing, burning and pathological changes were noted when present.

Tooth eruption and wear stages were measured using a combination of Halstead (1985), Grant (1982), Levine (1982) and Payne (1973), and fusion data was analysed according to Silver (1969). Measurements of adult, that is, fully fused bones were taken according to the methods of von den Driesch (1976), with asterisked (*) measurements indicating bones that were reconstructed or had slight abrasion of the surface.

Results

Condition and Taphonomy

The remains were generally of a poor overall condition, averaging at grade 4 on the Lyman criteria (1996). The remains displayed a high level of chemical leaching,

rootlet etching and fragmentation, which has severely limited the number of measurable and taphonomic traits observable within the assemblage.

A total of three fragments of bone, recovered from ditch [028], displayed evidence of butchery. The butchery marks were consistent those associated with meat removal and disarticulation of the carcass.

A single fragment of medium mammal sized long bone recovered from ring ditch [010] displayed evidence of burning.

Possible carnivore gnawing was noted on the proximal shaft of an *equid* tibia recovered from ditch [028].

No evidence of pathology was noted on any of the remains.

Table 1, Number of Identified Specimens Present (NISP), by Date and Feature

Taxon	Ring Ditch [010]	Ditch [028]	Total
<i>Equid</i> (Horse Family)		2	2
Cattle	2	1	3
Sheep/Goat	7	1	8
Pig		1	1
Dog	1		1
Large Mammal	21	7	28
Medium Mammal	19		19
Unidentified	13	2	15
N=	63	14	77

Table 1 shows the number of identified specimens (NISP) within the assemblage. As can be seen, sheep/goat were the most abundant species identified within the assemblage. Followed by cattle and *equid* (horse family). Single fragments of dog and pig were also identified within the assemblage.

Discussion

The assemblage from Holdingham is relatively small and therefore limited in providing information on underlying economies and husbandry practices save the presence of the animal remains on site. All of the bones were recovered from ring ditch [010] and ditch [028].

Known Iron Age remains were located within the immediate vicinity of the site. The assemblage from Holdingham Rising main, Lincoln Road (Kitch, 2006), produced a similar assemblage to the Holdingham Farm, in both species representation and preservation conditions. This would suggest the assemblage is a relatively typical representation for the area.

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Flint

By Tom Lane

Introduction

A single flint was submitted for analysis.

Condition

The piece is abraded but requires no conservation measures.

Results

Cxt No	Description	No	Wt(g)	Date
(035) 2	Bladelet. Heavily patinated. Cortex remains on Half of the dorsal surface. Small notches on one edge probably represent accidental damage rather than for the creation of microliths. 14 x 6 x 1mm	1	<1	Mesolithic

Potential

Dating to the Mesolithic period the item is a small bladelet of the type used in creating microliths. It indicates the presence of a flintworker in the vicinity during the Mesolithic period but as a single find there is little to be added regarding the techniques of flintworking in use at the time.

Appendix [7]

THE FINDS

GLASS

By Gary Taylor

Introduction

Two pieces of glass weighing a total of were recovered.

Condition

Although naturally fragile the glass is in moderate-good condition. Two fairly large pieces were collected. Both exhibit severe iridescent decay.

Results

Table 1, Glass Archive

Cxt	Description	NoF	W (g)	Date
030	Dark olive green bottle base with steep kick-up and fairly columnar neck with compact string rim, heavy iridescence on both items	2	358	Late 18 th - early 19 th century

Provenance

The glass was recovered from the fill (030) of a ditch [028].

Range

Two parts of probably a single bottle were recovered. The neck is fairly columnar, tapering slightly to the string rim at the top, and the rim is fairly compact and not prominently splayed. Bottle necks of this form are typical of the late 18th-early 19th century, with closely similar examples bearing date stamps from the 1770s until about 1820 (Van den Bossche 2001).

Potential

The glass provides dating evidence and the recovery of fairly large pieces suggests it has not been disturbed much since initial deposition.

OTHER FINDS

By Gary Taylor

Introduction

A single other find weighing 3g was recovered.

Condition

The other find is in excellent condition and complete.

Results

Table 2, Other Materials

Cxt	Material	Description	NoF	W (g)	Date
013, sf 1	Jet? Shale?	Ring, c. 29mm diam, internal perforation 16mm diam; wedge profile, between 3mm and 5mm thick	1	3	Roman?

Provenance

The item was recovered from the fill (013) of a ditch [014].

Range

An annular bead or pendant, apparently of jet or shale, was recovered. In form and size it is closely similar to annular beads of other materials, particularly glass, that occur throughout the Roman period (eg, Crummy 1995, 32). It is also very closely similar to a discoid jet or shale pendant found in North Yorkshire associated with a Roman gold finger-ring and thought to be of comparable date (Portable Antiquities Scheme 2012), though this pendant has a narrower, 11mm diameter, perforation.

Jet was also very popular for decorative items, particularly mourning jewellery, in the Victorian period, especially after the death of Prince Albert in 1861.

The material is of uncertain identification. It does not develop an electrostatic charge and therefore seems unlikely to be true jet. However, shale (Kimmeridge shale), glass, horn, plastic, celluloid and rubbers were all used to mimic jet.

Potential

The other find is of moderate potential. Its completeness suggests it has not been disturbed since initial deposition and it is a type of item that would not normally be expected to be casually lost; its associations may establish whether or not it was deliberately deposited.

SPOT DATING

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

Table 3, Spot dates

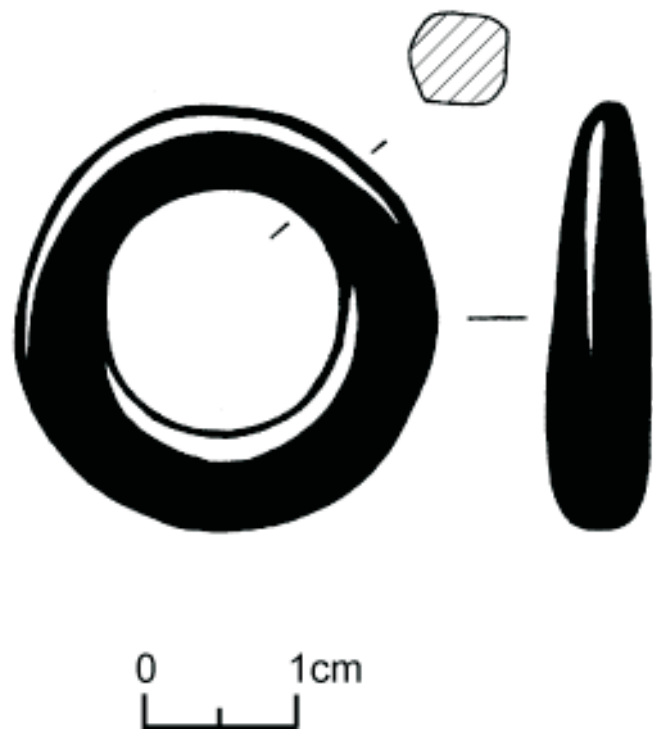
Cxt	Date	Comments
013	Roman?	Based on 1 item
030	Late 18 th -early 19 th century	Based on glass

ABBREVIATIONS

CXT	Context
NoF	Number of Fragments
W (g)	Weight (grams)

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Drawing of jet ring at scale 2:1

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES
DURHAM UNIVERSITY

on behalf of
Pre-Construct Archaeological Services

Land at Holdingham Farms
Holdingham
Lincolnshire

palaeoenvironmental assessment

report 3928
October 2015



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1. Summary

The project

- 1.1 This report presents the results of palaeoenvironmental assessment of two bulk samples taken during archaeological works at Holdingham, Lincolnshire.
- 1.2 The works were commissioned by Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd (PCAS), and conducted by Archaeological Services Durham University.

Results

- 1.3 The absence of diagnostic palaeoenvironmental remains provides little information about the nature or origin of the features. Faunal remains recovered from ditch fill (12) suggest the presence of domestic food waste. Evidence from the charcoal assemblages indicates hearth waste, although charred plant remains such as cereal crops or wild-gathered foods were absent. The complete lack of food waste from pit fill (35) may reflect an alternative use for this feature.

Recommendations

- 1.4 No further analysis is needed due to the absence of diagnostic palaeoenvironmental remains. If the artefactual evidence does not provide a close date, then AMS dating of selected charcoal remains could be undertaken in order to confirm the origin of the deposits. If additional work is undertaken at the site, the results of this assessment should be added to any further palaeoenvironmental data produced.
- 1.5 The flots should be retained as part of the physical archive of the site. A sample of fire-cracked stones and iron-rich nodules was also retained. The residues were discarded following examination.

2. Project background

Location and background

- 2.1 An archaeological excavation was conducted by PCAS on land at Holdingham, near Sleaford, Lincolnshire. This report presents the results of palaeoenvironmental assessment of two bulk samples comprising a ditch fill (12) and a pit fill (35) of uncertain origin.

Objective

- 2.2 The objective of the scheme of works was to assess the palaeoenvironmental potential of the samples, establish the presence of suitable radiocarbon dating material, and provide the client with appropriate recommendations.

Dates

- 2.3 Samples were received by Archaeological Services on 30th September 2015. Assessment and report preparation was conducted between 30th September and 8th October 2015.

Personnel

- 2.4 Sample processing, assessment and report preparation was conducted by Lorne Elliott. The fragments of flint were assessed by Dr Helen Drinkall and faunal remains were identified by Dr Carrie Armstrong.

Archive

- 2.5 The site code is **HHFX14**. The flots and finds are currently held in the Palaeoenvironmental Laboratory at Archaeological Services Durham University awaiting collection or return. The charcoal remains will be retained at Archaeological Services Durham University.

3. Methods

- 3.1 The bulk samples were manually floated and sieved through a 500 μ m mesh. The residues were examined for shells, fruitstones, nutshells, charcoal, small bones, pottery, flint, glass and industrial residues, and were scanned using a magnet for ferrous fragments. The flots were examined at up to x60 magnification for charred and waterlogged botanical remains using a Leica MZ7.5 stereomicroscope. Identification of these was undertaken by comparison with modern reference material held in the Palaeoenvironmental Laboratory at Archaeological Services Durham University. Plant nomenclature follows Stace (1997).
- 3.2 Selected charcoal fragments were identified, in order to provide material suitable for radiocarbon dating. The transverse, radial and tangential sections were examined at up to x600 magnification using a Leica DMLM microscope. Identifications were assisted by the descriptions of Schweingruber (1990) and Hather (2000), and modern reference material held in the Palaeoenvironmental Laboratory at Archaeological Services Durham University.
- 3.3 The snail remains were identified to species using the descriptions of Cameron (2008) and Kerney & Cameron (1979). Nomenclature follows Anderson (2005) and habitat classifications follow Cameron (2008) and Kerney & Cameron (1979).

- 3.4 The works were undertaken in accordance with the palaeoenvironmental research aims and objectives outlined in the regional archaeological research framework and resource agendas (Monckton 2006; Hall & Huntley 2007; Huntley 2010).

4. Results

- 4.1 Both contexts comprised very fragmented deposits of charcoal, fire-cracked stones of various sizes and an unusually large quantity of small iron-rich nodules, many of which were also heat-affected. It is uncertain whether the roasting of these nodules was deliberate or accidental.
- 4.2 Generally, the charcoal was in very poor condition due to vitrification, radial cracks and mineral inclusions. The small fragment size and condition of the charcoal prevented detailed identification and interpretation in many instances, although it was possible to identify several species. Ditch fill (12) predominantly comprised oak, with field maple, cf. *Maloideae* (apple, hawthorn or whitebeams) and cf. cherries (blackthorn, wild or bird cherry) noted. Pit fill (35) contained hazel, ash and cf. elder.
- 4.3 Small fragments of pot and fired clay frequently occurred in ditch fill (12), which also produced small fragments of bone (unburnt, burnt and calcined), a few animal teeth (cf. pig and sheep/goat-sized) and a piece of worked flint. Apart from two fragments of worked flint, finds were absent from pit fill (35).
- 4.4 Charred plant macrofossils were absent from both deposits. Low numbers of uncharred weed seeds including thistles, redshank, black-bindweed and clover were recorded, however, the presence of roots suggests that these are recent intrusions.
- 4.5 A small number of land snails typical of dry calcareous grassland occurred in both samples. Identified species included *Pupilla muscorum* (Linnaeus), *Vallonia* sp and the burrowing snail *Cecilioides acicula* (Müller). Material suitable for radiocarbon dating is available for both samples. The results are presented in Appendix 1.

5. Discussion

- 5.1 The absence of diagnostic palaeoenvironmental remains provides little information about the nature or origin of the features. Faunal remains (charred and uncharred) recovered from ditch deposit (12) suggest the presence of domestic food waste. The fragmentary nature and species diversity of the charcoal assemblages is typical of hearth waste, although evidence of charred plant remains such as cereal crops or wild-gathered foods was absent. The complete lack of food waste from pit fill (35) may reflect an alternative use for this feature.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 No further analysis is needed due to the absence of diagnostic palaeoenvironmental remains. If the artefactual evidence does not provide a close date, then AMS dating of selected charcoal remains could be undertaken in order to confirm the origin of the deposits. If additional work is undertaken at the site, the results of this assessment should be added to any further palaeoenvironmental data produced.

- 6.2 The flots should be retained as part of the physical archive of the site. A sample of fire-cracked stones and iron-rich nodules was also retained. The residues were discarded following examination.

7. Sources

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- Huntley, J P, 2010 *A review of wood and charcoal recovered from archaeological excavations in Northern England*. Research Department Report Series no. **68**. London
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- Stace, C, 1997 *New Flora of the British Isles*. Cambridge

Appendix 1: Data from palaeoenvironmental assessment

Sample		1	6
Context		12	35
Feature number		10	34
Feature		ditch	pit
Material available for radiocarbon dating		✓	(✓)
Volume processed (l)		34	36
Volume of flot (ml)		150	100
<i>Residue contents</i>			
Bone (burnt)	indet. frags	(+)	-
Bone (calcined)	indet. frags	+	-
Bone (unburnt)	indet. frags	+	-
Cracked stones (heat-affected)		++	+++
Flint (naturally fractured)		+	++
Flint (worked)		1	2
Fired clay		+++	-
Iron nodules (heat-affected)		+++	+++
Pot (number of fragments)		>50	-
Tooth (animal - enamel fragment)		4	-
<i>Flot matrix</i>			
Bone (calcined)	indet. frags	+	-
Bone (unburnt)	indet. frags	++	-
Charcoal		++	++
Clinker / cinder		(+)	-
Coal		(+)	-
Fired clay		+	-
Rhizome (charred)		(+)	-
Roots (modern)		++	++
Snails	terrestrial	+	++
Uncharred seeds		++	(+)
<i>Identified charcoal (✓ presence)</i>			
<i>Acer campestre</i> (Field Maple)		✓	-
<i>Corylus avellana</i> (Hazel)		-	✓
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Ash)		-	✓
cf. Maloideae (cf. Hawthorn, apple, whitebeams)		✓	-
<i>Quercus</i> sp (Oaks)		✓	-
<i>Prunus</i> sp (Cherries-blackthorn, wild and bird cherry)		✓	-
cf. <i>Sambucus nigra</i> (cf. elder)		-	✓

[(+): trace; +: rare; ++: occasional; +++: common; ++++: abundant
 (✓) may be unsuitable for dating due to size or species]

Holdingham Farms, Hodingham
HHFX15
LCNCC:2015.63

Finds Catalogue

Context	Material	No.	Weight (g)	Description	Date	Action
029	Oyster shell	1	42g			Discard

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OASIS ID: preconst3-250416

Project details

Project name	HOLDINGHAM FARMS, HOLDINGHAM, LINCOLNSHIRE
Short description of the project	Outline planning permission was granted by North Kesteven District Council for a residential development to the south of the A17 at Holdingham Farms, Holdingham, Lincolnshire. An archaeological evaluation of the site in 2012 revealed two areas of activity; at the north-western corner, and within the south-eastern quadrant, where evidence of burnt agricultural features and timber structures featured in the latter. The results suggested that the site lay within Holdingham's hinterland and, prior to the medieval period, focused on subsistence farming. Subsequent to evaluation, PCAS Ltd. was commissioned to undertake a scheme of archaeological mitigation works on the proposed development site to ensure the effective preservation by record of the site's archaeological resource. Excavation exposed a limited number of archaeological features, the majority of which were of likely agricultural origin, dating from the medieval and post-medieval periods. Also exposed was a relatively large penannular ditch, probably a roundhouse, dated to within the middle to late Iron Age. This roundhouse appears to have been relatively isolated in the landscape, perhaps reflecting the importance of its former occupants. A small hearth, tentatively dated to the Mesolithic period was also identified.
Project dates	Start: 01-07-2015 End: 31-08-2015
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	HHFX 14 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	12/1022/OUT - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 2 - Operations to a depth less than 0.25m
Monument type	RING DITCH Iron Age
Monument type	BOUNDARY DITCH Medieval
Monument type	BOUNDARY DITCH Post Medieval
Monument type	FURROW Post Medieval
Monument type	PIT Mesolithic

Significant Finds POTTERY Iron Age
 Significant Finds FLINT Mesolithic
 Significant Finds GLASS Post Medieval
 Investigation type "Open-area excavation"
 Prompt Planning condition

Project location

Country England
 Site location LINCOLNSHIRE NORTH KESTEVEN SLEAFORD Holdingham Farms, Holdingham, Sleaford
 Study area 1.76 Hectares
 Site coordinates TF 0640 4720 53.01120498491 -0.413932390337 53 00 40 N 000 24 50 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd
 Project brief originator Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
 Project design originator Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd
 Project director/manager Will Munford
 Project supervisor R. Mandeville
 Type of sponsor/funding body Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient The Collection, Lincoln
 Physical Contents "Ceramics", "Glass", "Worked stone/lithics", "Animal Bones"
 Digital Archive recipient The Collection, Lincoln
 Digital Contents "Animal Bones", "Ceramics", "Glass", "Worked stone/lithics"
 Digital Media available "Database", "Images raster / digital photography", "Text"
 Paper Archive recipient The Collection, Lincoln
 Paper Contents "Animal Bones", "Ceramics", "Glass", "Worked stone/lithics"
 Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Diary", "Drawing", "Map", "Notebook - Excavation", ' Research', ' General Notes', "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section"

Entered by Leigh Brocklehurst (leigh@pre-construct.co.uk)

Entered on 4 May 2016

OASIS:

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